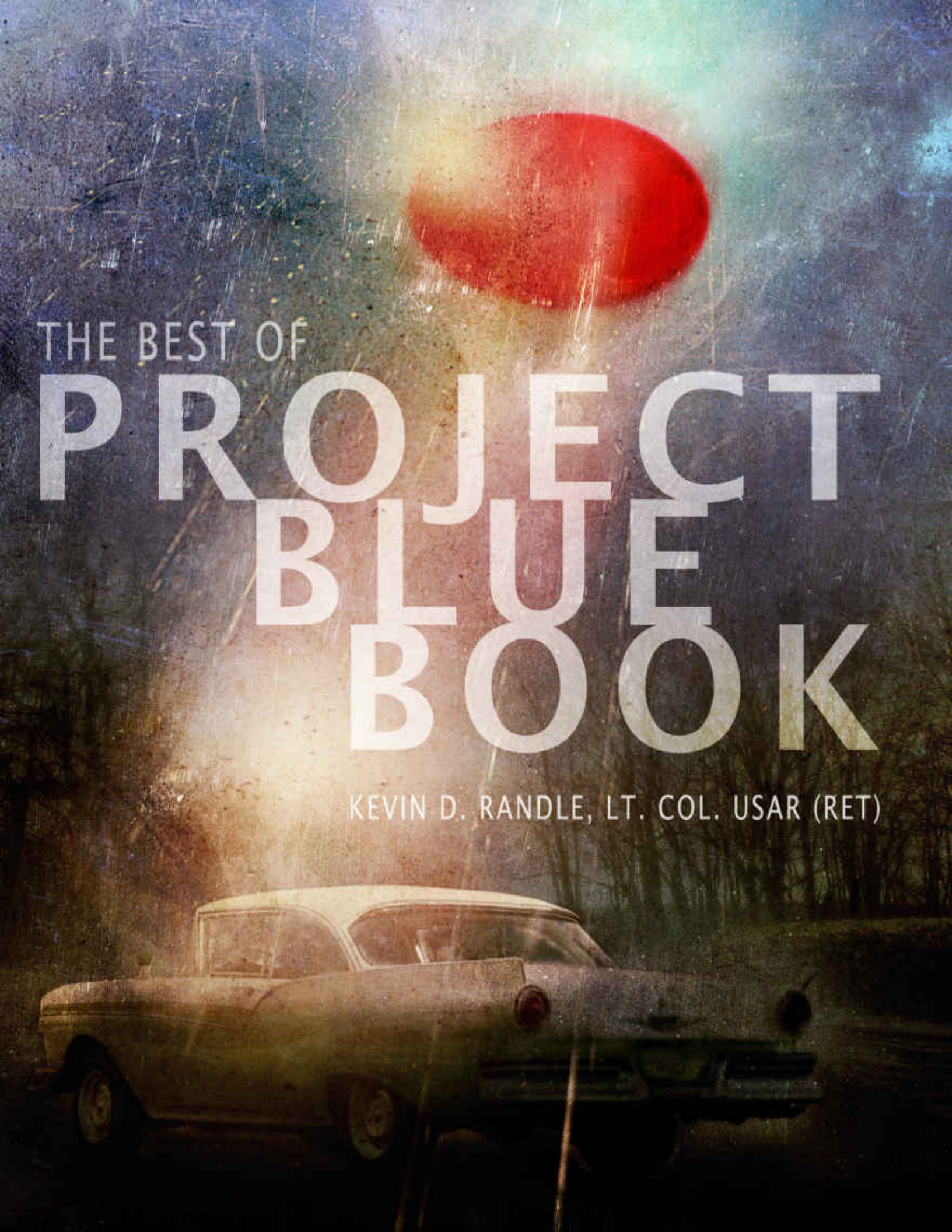
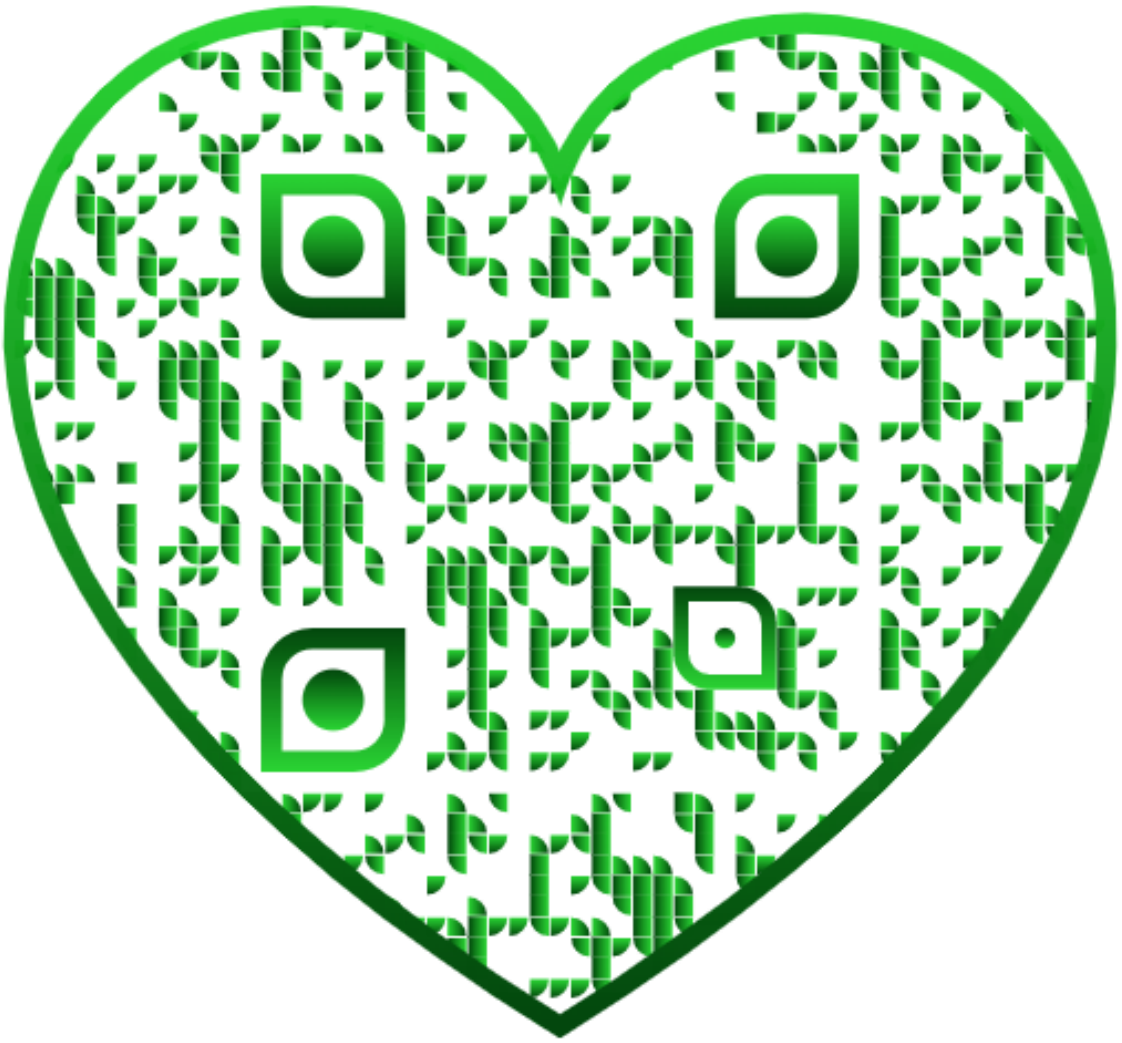

THE BEST OF
PROJECT BLUE BOOK
KEVIN D. RANDLE, LT. COL. USAR (RET)



The Best of Project Blue Book

by

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Introduction

The official, public investigation into what would become known as UFOs, began with Project Sign in January, 1948. It lasted for twenty-two years and ended in 1969 after a study at the University of Colorado, known as the Condon Committee and sponsored by the Air Force. The Condon Committee concluded that there were no national security implications, and there was nothing of scientific value that could be learned by continuing the study of UFO sightings.

Dr. Edward Condon

A statistical analysis of the cases investigated by the Blue Book officers and

consultants tell us that they studied over 12,000 UFO reports. Of those, they managed to identify all but 701. They believed had they been given complete information in the original report, that those 701 would have been resolved as well. They were saying that there was nothing to suggest anything other than natural phenomena, misidentifications, delusions and outright hoaxes.

But, if you included all those case that the Blue Book staff labeled as “Insufficient Data for a Scientific Analysis,” then the number climbs to several thousand. If you ignore some of those solutions offered for cases but that are problematic or obvious errors, then those can also be added to the list of sightings that have no logical solution. In other words, a case can be made suggesting that nearly half of the sightings investigated by the Air Force during those twenty-two years are either unexplained or have an explanation that is problematic.

None of that means that there is nothing important in the Project Blue Book files. A search of those cases, what I would consider the best of Blue Book, paints a completely different picture. A look at many of these cases, provides a glimpse into what was really happening and what was really being seen.

While many of the cases examined here have no solutions according to the Air Force, others have been labeled with some kind of mundane or terrestrial explanation. It is not my intention to overlook a good case simply because the Air Force labeled it. A good example is the series of sightings that took place around Levelland, Texas, in 1957. Although the witnesses were widely scattered, were independent of one another and reported an object that interacted with the environment, the US Air Force

labeled the case as “ball lightning.”

UFO FACT SHEET

The Air Force investigation of UFO's began in 1948 and was known as Project Sign. Later the name was changed to Project Grudge, and in 1953, it became Project Blue Book. Between 1948 and 1969 we investigated 12,618 reported sightings.

The following is a statistical listing of reported UFO sightings during the Air Force investigation:

TOTAL UFO SIGHTINGS, 1947 - 1969

YEAR	TOTAL SIGHTINGS	UNIDENTIFIED
1947	122	12
1948	156	7
1949	186	23
1950	210	27
1951	149	22
1952	1,501	303
1953	509	42
1954	487	46
1955	545	24
1956	570	14
1957	1,406	14
1958	627	10
1959	390	12
1960	557	14
1961	591	13
1962	474	15
1963	399	14
1964	562	13
1965	887	18
1966	1,112	32
1967	937	16
1968	371	3
1969	148	1
TOTAL	12,618	701

Of these total sightings, 11,917 were found to have been caused by material objects (such as balloons, satellites, and aircraft), immaterial objects (such as lightning, reflections and other natural phenomena), astronomical objects (such as stars, planets, the sun and the moon), weather conditions and hoaxes. As indicated only 701 reported sightings remain unexplained.

Attachment 2, pg

The Air Force Fact Sheet giving the sighting numbers of Project Blue Book.

This was interesting because, in 1957, science was arguing about the reality of ball lightning, exactly what it was, if it did exist and how it would manifest itself. It is amazing to me that anyone, in 1957, would have accepted that explanation without asking some tough questions. In fact, they could dismiss that answer by simply suggesting that there was no good evidence that ball lightning even existed. Today, we understand ball lightning and we know that it is not a viable solution for the Levelland sightings. Ball lightning is short lived, extremely rare and never more than a foot or two in diameter. It does not fit with the reports from around Levelland.

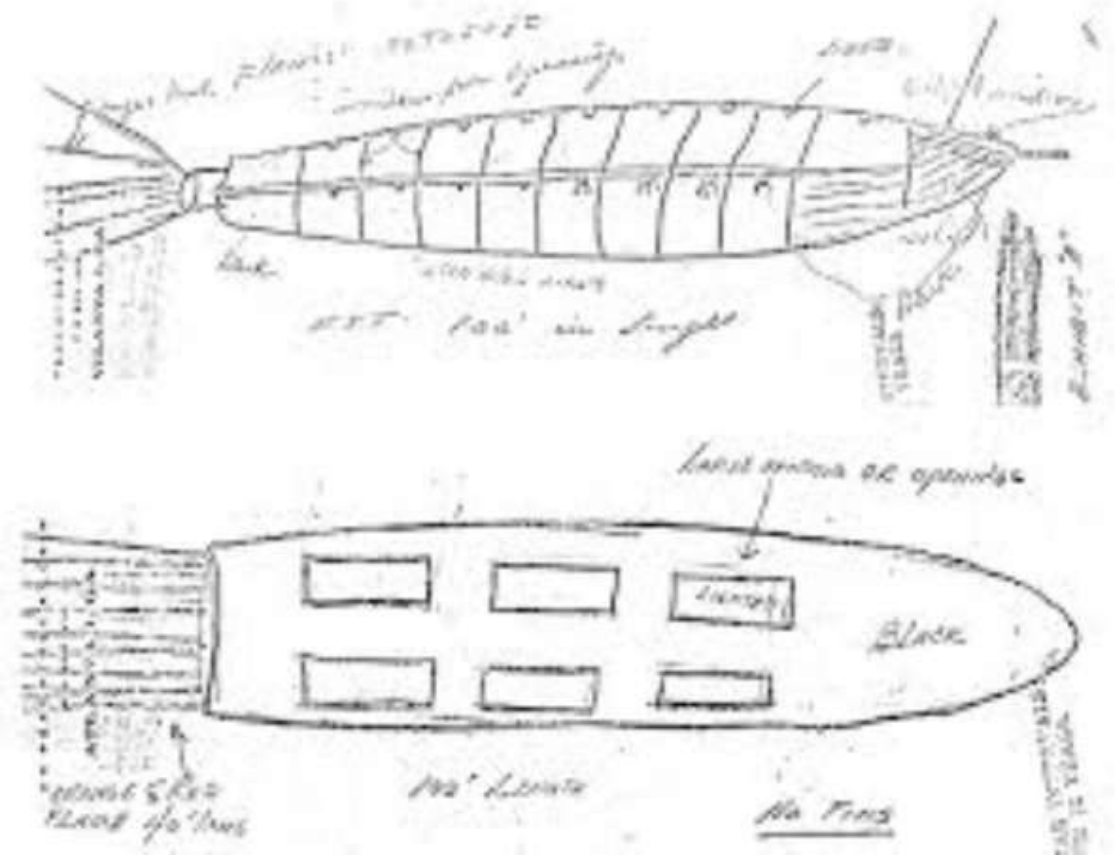
In researching the Blue Book files, the point was to find the best cases, the ones marked as unidentified, but also examine many of the others when it seemed the evidence warranted it. Why ignore a case just because the Air Force claimed that it was solved?

Ball Lightning.

Another good example of this is the series of sightings around Ann Arbor, Michigan, in the spring of 1966. There were multiple witnesses, including law enforcement officers, who reported strange objects visiting the area over several nights. While some of those sightings seemed to be located in swampy areas around local farms, others were made high in the sky, over areas far removed from those swamps. The ultimate explanation, found in the Blue Book files, of swamp gas, simply does not fit the facts. This was a case that was labeled but not actually identified.

There are some of the best-known cases that are avoided here. While the Kenneth Arnold sighting on June 24, 1947, launched a national interest in flying saucers, it is not a particularly good case and is, in essence, single witness. The description of the craft has been subtly altered over the years, and Arnold's estimate of size and distance might be inaccurate. The real reason to avoid it here is that it is well known and has been recounted many times in other books and articles including some of those written by me.

The Chiles-Whitted sighting of July, 1948, which helped launch the famed Estimate of the Situation, was probably a bolide and of no real interest here. The evidence for this is in the reentry of the Zond IV spacecraft in March 1968. Although most of those who witnessed the craft as it broke up and burned knew what they were seeing, a few people described a cigar-shaped craft with lighted, square windows and a flame trailing it. Those descriptions matched those given by Clarence Chiles and John Whitted. While it is obvious, they had not seen a disintegrating alien ship, it is also obvious that they were watching a meteor as it broke up.



Illustrations of the objects reported by Chiles and Whitted.

The Roswell case is not mentioned simply because it was not mentioned in the Blue Book files with a single exception. In a newspaper clipping in another case file, the third paragraph said that the officers at Roswell had been reprimanded for their press release. Given that, Roswell was not one of the best of Blue Book. It was virtually unknown to the officers there or if it was, they avoided writing down anything about it. In this work, I have gone outside the Blue Book files, gathering additional information about the cases, but those cases were all part of the Blue Book system. I just used information available to me today that they did not have access to so long ago.

The same thing can be said for a few other high-profile cases. While they were investigated by the Blue Book officers, or, at least, mentioned in the Blue Book files, they are not among the best. Such are the sightings in New York area, that Donald Keyhoe, then the director of the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP), believed was part of a series that began on July 1, 1954, with the report

of a disk-shaped object over Rome, New York. It hovered for several hours before disappearing.

Then, on July 2, 1954, a jet interceptor crashed into an intersection in Walesville, New York, killing four people on the ground. It began when pilots on a training mission were diverted to an active air defense intercept mission. The crew was asked to identify an unknown target spotted on radar and vectored to the UFO. Before that UFO could be identified, the pilot was told of a second unknown. He closed on that second object, which he identified as a C-47 that, for some reason, had no flight plan. The interceptor pilot broke off the chase.

Jet Engine found in Walesville, New York.

Released from the mission and returning to Griffiss Air Force Base, the pilot reported that he had a firing warning light on the cockpit display. He said the cockpit filled with heat and he, and the radar officer bailed out. The aircraft continued to fly, finally crashing into Walesville.

While all this is tragic, there were no UFOs involved. The disk-shaped object was identified as a partially deflated balloon. Because it hung in the sky for hours, the identity is well established. There was no evidence of an in-flight fire but the fire warning system had failed. There was no explanation found to explain that.

F-94 Fighter

For the record, there is no official file for this case. For the Air Force it is classified as an aircraft accident. In the Blue Book files master index, it is listed as “Info Only.” That was their way of saying that they had not bothered to investigate it.

The point here is that I have arbitrarily elected to include some cases that are not as well-known and reject others that are. The idea was to present the best of Blue Book rather than the best known. Those cases that deserve to be examined in the light of what we know today.

The Project Blue Book staff in the 1960s. Hector Quintanilla is in the center.

There are a few other aspects to this as well. During all the years that I have engaged in UFO research, I have had the opportunity to talk with several people who served with Blue Book, including the last officer there. He was the one who actually turned out the lights after Lieutenant Colonel Hector Quintanilla left the organization. His insights to what it was like after the Condon Committee had handed down their death sentence, provides some additional insight.

He told me that the cases weren't classified. In the years that he served with Blue Book, the cases weren't classified but, in the beginning, as you review the files, you learn that many of those cases were classified. However, after the CIA sponsored Robertson Panel suggested that the mystery be removed from the flying saucers, things changed. Only those sightings that were explained were to be released to the public. If the investigating officers were unable to provide a viable solution, they were to refer reporters to a higher headquarters.

Air Force Regulation (AFR) 200-2 and later AFR 80-17 spelled that out. Officers who failed to obey the regulations could find themselves in hot water. In one of the cases you'll read about here, the Red Bluff, California, sightings, you'll discover that an officer who said one thing one day said something else the next. He had apparently learned that he was not to talk about the sighting to anyone who was not cleared to hear about it.

The point here, however, is to set up what comes next. This is all about the official investigation and the best cases as I have seen them. It is a comprehension history of the project, how it was conducted, and an examination of the investigations. We'll see that, at the very worst, Blue Book demonstrated that there was something going on and that it was something that should have been investigated. A sighting from Labrador in 1954 proved it. The Condon Committee indirectly said there was some scientific value that could be taken from that case.

The other thing that needs to be said here and as I mentioned, is that I had access to information that those at Blue Book did not. The advance of our technology, our understanding of the natural world around us, and our ability to see all of the Blue Book files, gives us a chance to understand what was happening. I have applied some of the information here so that readers can make up their minds about what to believe. Had the officers are Blue Book had some of this information, and had their investigation not turned into a public relations task, their conclusions might have been different. Had they not pursued this from the point of view that there was no alien visitation, things might have turned out differently.

In my opinion, once it had been determined that flying saucers posed no threat to national security and that they didn't represent some kind of technological leap forward in aviation by a foreign power, the Air Force

lost interest. The trouble was, everyone expected them to continue the investigations until a real answer was found.

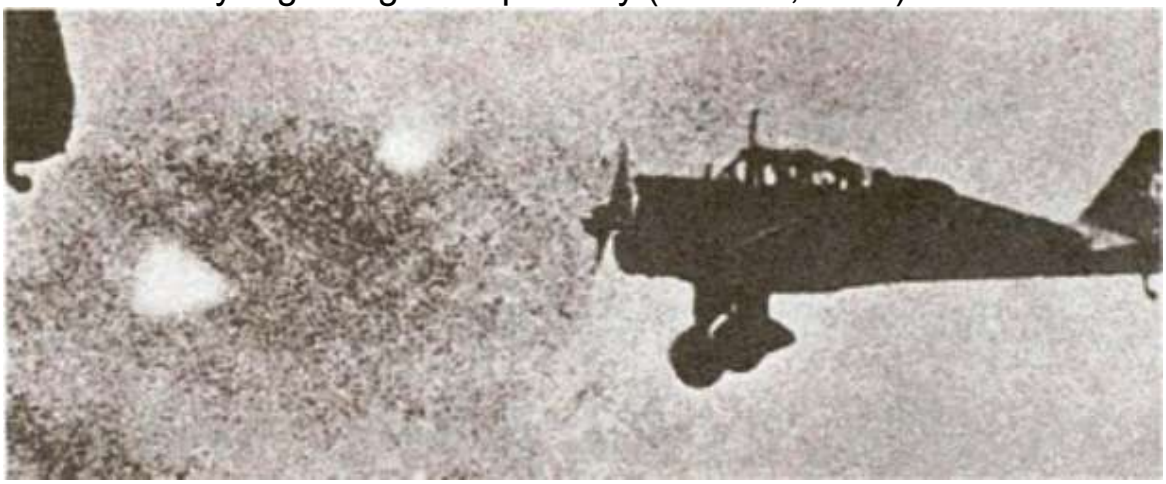
But their mission had changed. No longer was it actual research, it was public relations. Convince the public that there was no alien visitation. In the end, all they wanted to do was get out of the UFO business with as much dignity as possible after wasting millions of dollars and spending twenty-two years without solving anything.

Now that we have access to all the files and all the cases, we can take a look at that information to see how good some of them were. It is important to understand that I'm not constrained by the rules and regulations under which the Air Force operated, and that I have access to fifty years of technology and scientific advancement that they didn't have. I can solve cases they couldn't and I can show where their explanations have failed which is the whole point here.

Following, then, is what I consider some of the best cases buried in the tens of thousands of pages of documentation found in the Blue Book files. It presents a different picture from the one that we have been force fed since the end of Blue Book in 1969. It reveals that there were some good investigations hidden among those that were less than competent. Here then is what I consider *The Best of Project Blue Book*.

Chapter 1: The Beginning of the Modern UFO Era

Contrary to what some believe, Project Blue Book was not the first official investigation into UFOs. There were a series of projects that proceeded it, though it might be said that it was an extension of those earlier projects. However, when you begin to talk about anomalous aerial phenomena, you can look back to the Foo Fighters of the Second World War. This was the true beginning of US interest in these sorts of things, an interest born in the heat of the war and a fear that the Nazis had developed some sort of a super aircraft that could change the course of the conflict by regaining air superiority (Chester, 2007).



A picture of an alleged Foo Fighters seen during World War II.

It wasn't until 1944 that Allied airmen began routinely reporting seeing strange balls of light, sometimes solid objects, as they made their raids into occupied Europe. On November 23, Lieutenant Edward Schluter, a member of the 415th Night Fighter Squadron, took off from Dijon, France. Near Strasbourg, Lieutenant F. Ringwald, the intelligence officer, spotted eight to ten balls of red fire moving at what he thought was a great velocity.

Neither ground nor airborne based radar showed anything. In the aircraft, Lieutenant Donald J. Meiers, said that he had no enemy aircraft on his radar. Schluter turned toward the lights and they seemed to vanish. Moments later, they reappeared but were now much farther

away. After five or six minutes, they began to glide, leveled out and disappeared. They did not reappear.(Keith, 2007; pp. 102 – 103)

Meiers, according to some of the documentation available today, and for the lack of a better name, referred to the lights as Foo Fighters, or maybe faux fighters. As often happens in situation like that, and that name, Foo Fighters, stuck.

The Allied high command, having received many reports of these Foo Fighters, formed a task force to investigate them, fearing that they might be some kind of weapon developed by the Nazis. The idea was to gather as much intelligence about them as

Keith Chester author of *Strange Company*

they could hoping that they could identify the source of the Foo Fights. One of those officers charged with the task of identification was Colonel Howard McCoy (Keith, 2007: pp. 80, 215). He was an American intelligence officer, was known to his colleagues of other nations, and was respected for his abilities in similar intelligence situations.

Before they could find a solution, before they could gather the proper intelligence, the war ended. With the collapse of Nazi Germany, the Allied intelligence officers now had access to a great deal of documentation recovered from the captured territory. It was now clear that the Foo Fighters were not a new weapon developed by German scientists. In fact, the Nazis had been bothered by the same thing, thinking the Foo Fighters were a weapon developed by the Allies. There isn't much of the way of investigative documentation found in the German archives about the Foo Fighters, and there is nothing to suggest that they had any insight into the source of the Foo Fighters.

The point here is that there was an official, classified, military investigation into the Foo Fighters being seen by air crews as the flew their combat missions. There were also reports from ground units serving in Europe which suggested that the Foo Fighters were not somehow

generated by all the aircraft flying in formations. It wasn't some sort of natural response to all that airborne activity or some kind of ionization of the atmosphere as some have suggested. It was a mystery that, at one time, held a priority (Keith, 2007; Clark 2018, pp. 501 - 504).

When the war ended and the threat of Nazi super weapons removed, the imperative to discover the source of the Foo Fighters evaporated. Although they had no solution for what was seen, no one cared any longer. The investigation fizzled as everyone went on to other, more pressing matters including the rebuilding of Europe and Japan.

Then, in 1946, less than a year after the war ended, those living in Scandinavia began reporting what were eventually labeled as the Ghost Rockets. Ironically, these sightings might have begun with a report by an American pilot. According to Jerome Clark in his massive *UFO Encyclopedia*, *Third Edition*:

> At 11 p.m. on January 18, 1946, as an American C-46 transport plane was passing over rural France at 7000 feet, the pilot observed what he took to be a brilliant meteor at 35 degrees above the eastern horizon. The object fell and was lost to view – but only momentarily. To the witness' astonishment the "meteor" ascended, then "described a tiny hyperbole of perhaps one degree of altitude and then fell again from sight (Gross 1988; Clark 2018, 523)."
>
> Whatever the phenomenon was, it clearly had not been a meteor. Soon Europeans and others would call such phenomena "ghost rockets" and ascribe then to secret Soviet experiments with captured V-2 missiles. Many of the rockets would be meteors, but none, so history attests, were missiles from Russia, which at the time, possessed only a primitive missile technology… (Clark, 2018, pp. 523 – 524).
>
> These craft were reported in Finland and Sweden and eventually all over northern Europe. No explanation for them has been offered, though many blamed the Soviet Union. When the Soviet Union collapsed, and government records were searched, there was nothing found to suggest that the Soviets had anything to do with the Ghost Rockets (Clark, 1998).

Although it might be said that this was the first of the Ghost Rockets seen, the next well-known sighting didn't take place until May 24, 1946. Witnesses in Sweden, over two nights, reported seeing a "wingless, cigar-shaped body of the dimensions of a

small airplane." It spewed sparks from the rear at regular intervals like that of a chemically propelled rocket. It was flying at a very low altitude and moving at the speed of an airplane so it was not operating outside the parameters of know aircraft and was not a meteor.

Ghost Rocket seen over Sweden.

The sightings did not go unnoticed by officials in the United States. In a September 4, 1946, document to the FBI that was originally classified as top secret, from Mr. Lyon, it was reported:

> While over 800 reports have been received and now reports come daily, Swedes still have no tangible evidence. Full details of reports thus far have been forwarded to Washington by our Military and Naval Attaches. My own source personally convinced some foreign power is actually experimenting over Sweden and he guesses it is Russia. He has promised to notify me before anyone else if anything tangible should be discovered.

As can be seen from the FBI document, there were regular reports of the Ghost Rockets that came from many eyewitnesses in many locations in Scandinavia. The Swedish Air Force, along with the Finnish Air Force, attempted to identify them. Failing that, and worrying about public panic because of the unidentified nature of the Ghost Rockets, government officials began an attempt to suppress the reports, hoping, if nothing else, that would end the popular interest in the topic. That solution did work, and the Ghost Rockets soon faded from the world stage.

Which is not to say that sightings ended completely or remained strictly over Scandinavia. More importantly, there were additional sightings that caught the attention of those in the United States. On April 5, 1946, an Army Air Forces officer, Captain Jack E. Puckett along with his crew on a C-47 transport, were on their way from Langley Field,

Virginia, to McDill Field in Tampa, Florida. They spotted a strange object heading toward them. Puckett filed a report with McDill operations and in a letter to retired major Donald Keyhoe, of civilian run National Investigations Committee on Ariel Phenomena (NICAP), Puckett wrote:

> At approximately 6 p.m. while flying a C-47 at 4000 feet northeast of Tampa I observed what I thought to be a shooting star to the southeast over the Atlantic Ocean. My co-pilot, Lt. Henry F. Glass, and my engineer both observed this object at the same time.
>
> This object continued toward us on a collision course at our exact altitude. At about 1000 yards it veered to cross our path. We observed it to be a long, cylindrical shape approximately twice the size of a B-29, with luminous portholes.

Puckett said that it seemed that the object was propelled by rocket engines. It trailed a stream of fire that was about one half of its length. Although it would seem, in our world today, that this was a bolide, which is an extremely bright meteor, Puckett said the object was in sight for two and a half to three minutes before it disappeared over the horizon. (*UFO Investigator*, August/September 1957 p. 15).

Also, in 1946, with no precise date given, Ralph Newman and his wife, in Darien, Connecticut, saw “a V-1 type exhaust behind something traveling at a colossal speed from north to south, from horizon to horizon right across the zenith.” (Clark, 1998, p. 446)

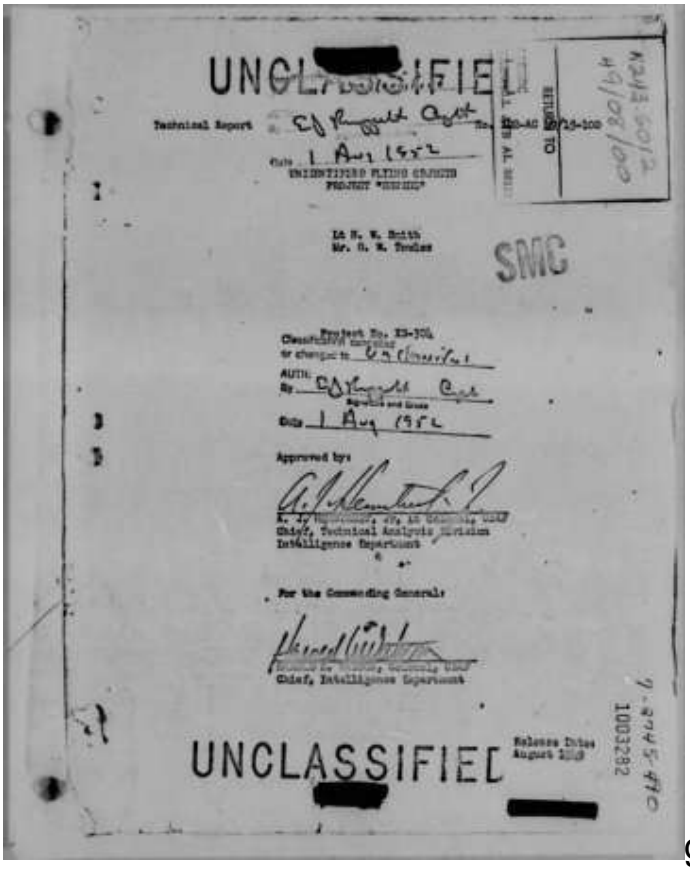
Another of the early sightings provides more insight into what was happening at that time over the United States. On April 1, 1947, near Richmond, Virginia, a member of U.S. Weather Bureau saw something strange that was the first in a series of sightings. Importantly, this case is not found in the Project Blue Book files, though it is listed as Incident No. 79 in Project Grudge final report. Grudge, of course, was the predecessor to Blue Book, and this hints that the information had found its way into the intelligence channels and the Air Technical Intelligence Center, at the time home to Blue Book. That it is missing is another of those mysteries about Blue Book that we have yet to solve. According to the report:

> A weather bureau observer at the Richmond Station observed on three different occasions, during a six-month period prior to April, 1947, a disc-like metal chrome object. All sightings were made through a theodolite while making pibal [balloon] observations.

On the last reported sighting, the balloon was at 15,000 feet altitude, the disc followed for 15 seconds. It was shaped like an ellipse with a flat level bottom and a dome-like top. The altitude and the speed were not estimated, but the object, allegedly through the instrument, appeared larger than the balloon.

Another observer at the same station saw a similar object under corresponding circumstances, with the exception that her balloon was at an altitude of 27,000 feet and possessed a dull-metallic luster. There was good visibility on days of observation. Report of this sighting was not submitted until 22 July 1947.

Front page of the Project Grudge final report originally classified as "Secret." It contains references to the Richmond sighting though there is no case file on it.



AMC Opinion: There is no readily apparent explanation. If there were only one such object, it seems amazingly coincidental that it would be seen four times near the pibal of this station only. On the other hand, there would have to be a great number of these objects to rule out coincidence, and as they number of objects increases so do the chances of sightings by other witnesses.

Project Astronomer's Opinion: There is no astronomical explanation for this incident, which, however, deserves considerable attention, because of the experience of the observers and the fact that the observations was made through a theodolite and that comparison could be made with a pibal balloon. The observers had, therefore, a good estimate of altitude, of relative size, and of speed – much more reliable than those given in most reports.

This investigation would like to recommend that these and other pibal observers be quizzed as to other possible, unreported sightings.

This refers to a series of reports, made by Walter Minczewski. When asked about the sightings later, he expressed surprise that there was any official notice of them. He didn't think that anyone outside the weather bureau knew that he had seen anything which suggests some sort of official intelligence collecting activity.

None of this would be important to us today except one of the American intelligence officers involved in these unofficial investigations was Colonel Howard McCoy. Since some of these aerial phenomena were reported by American service members and government employees, the sightings were of interest to various components of the US military. They searching for an explanation for them because of a possible threat to national security. The sightings over US territory implied a threat that had to be compromised. Unknown aircraft couldn't be allowed unrestricted to flight over the United States. The imperative that had evaporated at the end of the Second World War had been replaced.

In December 1946, an officer now assigned to the intelligence section at Wright Field, was ordered to set up an unofficial investigation of these aerial phenomenon. According to UFO historians Wendy Connors and Michael Hall, this done in a single room that had a very good lock on a very thick door. Only a few people knew it existed and even fewer had access to it. The officer in charge of this unofficial investigation? Colonel Howard McCoy.

There are a few points that need to be made here, especially about the gathering of data. Clearly, McCoy had access to the Foo Fighter files because he had been part of the original American team set up to determine what they were. He had also been involved in gathering data about the Ghost Rockets, from a diplomatic standpoint. General Jimmy

Doolittle had been sent to Sweden with an additional mission to learn something about the Ghost Rockets. That information was provided to McCoy. An FBI memo, if nothing else, showed a high level of interest in the Ghost Rockets in the United States. Now, McCoy was ordered to gather additional intelligence about these strange aerial phenomena that seemed to be related to the Ghost Rockets but that were not actually the same thing.

Colonel Howard McCoy. Photo courtesy USAF.

The sighting by Puckett demonstrates this because, at the time, there was no regulation requiring the reporting of these observations of unidentified aerial phenomena up the chain of command. Puckett undoubtedly made a report to his operations section at McDill. It entered some sort of collection system, even if it was reported as a close encounter with another conventional aircraft. Such an encounter would have required some sort of action to determine who had been in the wrong and what could be done to prevent similar incidents with a thought to avoiding potentially fatal accidents. That requirement set up a need for an investigation of this incident if nothing else even if they weren't thinking about anything extraterrestrial.

And the Minczewski sightings also suggest some kind of covert operation to gather this sort of intelligence. Minczewski made mention of it to his friends and superiors. One of them forwarded the information through channels because, had that not happened, we would have not learned about it at the time. Minczewski was surprised to learn that the information had made it into the hands of the intelligence officers. What he didn't know was that it had been part of McCoy's unofficial

investigation and then made its way into Project Sign, the first official investigation.

All this means is those at the top of the chain of command were interested, if not worried, about these reports of strange aerial phenomena seeming to operate outside the capabilities of conventional aircraft. Intelligence officers were gathering data without any sort of media interest in it because the press was busy with other things. But all that changed on June 24, 1947, when a business man named Kenneth Arnold saw nine strange objects in flight near Mount Rainier in Washington. His report opened the flood gates and both the media and the civilian worlds were suddenly aware that strange things were flying around over the United States. At that point, McCoy's unofficial investigation morphed into an official one that, in June 1947, had no official title or mission but one that was becoming a priority. Then, in September 1947, Lieutenant General Nathan Twining, commanding officer of the Air Materiel Command, in a letter that was written by McCoy, ordered an official, priority investigation created (Swords, 2010, pp. 51 – 53). This was Project Sign, the first acknowledged military investigation into what would eventually be called Unidentified Flying Objects, UFOs.

Project Sign, which was publicly called Project Saucer in 1948, began its investigative work on January 22, 1948 (Clark, 2018, pp. 934 -935). Most of the investigations were conducted by officers from the closest military base to the sighting. In the important cases, those with the potential for revealing high level intelligence, meaning information, or a breach of national security, officers from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base would be sent out to gather the information, any sort of corroborative evidence and interview the witnesses themselves.

In the summer of 1948, these investigations, which included sightings by both military and civilian pilots, lead to the creation of an Estimate of the Situation (EOTS). An EOTS is an intelligence method of consolidating, coordinating, and analyzing a great deal of information for which there are questions that need to be answered. In this

Captain Edward Ruppelt

case, according to Captain Ed Ruppelt, the officers at Wright-Patterson AFB were attempting to learn something about the flying saucers (Ruppelt, pp. 58 -60). Their analysis, based on the evidence they had gathered and reviewed, and the documentation that had been created, was that the flying saucers were alien spacecraft. To put it in the terms of the time, these were interplanetary craft as opposed to interstellar ships.

The Air Force Chief of Staff, General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, read the EOTS, and decided that the case for interplanetary craft was not proven. He rejected the report, or as Ruppelt would later write, “Batted it back down (Ruppelt, p. 64).” In other words, he did not accept the conclusion that the flying saucers were spacecraft. In the fallout of that failed report, those who had held that belief found their careers had been suddenly derailed. The pressure from the top to find an answer to the problem during the summer of 1947 had disappeared when no alien invasion fleet arrived or no terrestrially based source was discovered. The suspected threat to national security no longer existed, at least to their way of thinking. Those who remained behind at Sign, the lowest ranking members of the team who hadn’t been blamed for the flawed conclusion, were just going through the motions, apparently waiting for new and better assignments. The real investigation had ended.

In February, 1949, the Air Force announced that they had ended their investigation of UFOs. A report entitled *The Findings of Project Sign* was eventually written. It outlined the motivation behind Project Sign, who the players were, and the results of their research. In the summary, it was noted that the data in the report were “derived from reports of 243 domestic and thirty foreign incidents. Data from these incidents is being summarized, reproduced, and distributed to agencies and individuals cooperating in the analysis and evaluation… The data obtained in

reports received are studied in relation to many factors, such as guided missile research activity, weather and other atmospheric sounding balloon launchings, commercial and military aircraft flights, flights of migratory birds, and other considerations, to determine possible explanations for sightings (Steiger, 1976, pp. 170 – 217)."

Rather than ending the investigation as they announced, they merely changed the name. On February 11, 1949, Project Grudge was officially created and though it retained the rather high priority of Project Sign, the theory of those on the project was that there wasn't much to flying saucers. Those who had been around the Air Force for a while and who were aware of the trauma of the Estimate of the Situation had caused to those who had written it, weren't about to jeopardize their careers bucking the generals at the top (Clark, 2018, p. 935). They would go through the motions, they would provide the information and reports required, but the conclusions were had already been decided.

Interestingly, and in a belief that seems to still be alive today, the Air Force thought that if there was an article in the popular press debunking the idea of alien visitation, then people would lose interest in the subject. If the topic was seen as something fringe, or that was simply impossible, then interest in flying saucers would fade away. The Air Force was willing to cooperate with a journalist from a respected magazine who would tell the story the way the Air Force wanted it told. The arrangements were made and the magazine was selected. The two-part article following that theory appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post* and suggested that UFOs were hoaxes, misidentifications illusions but certainly not alien spacecraft. The plan didn't work because in the days that followed the article, the number of sightings reported to the Air Force spiked. Apparently, people, learning the Air Force was still investigating flying saucers, found a place to report their sightings (Swords, pp. 72 – 74; Ruppelt, pp 85 - 86).

Despite all this, in August, 1949, the officers assigned to Grudge issued a huge document and although they reported that some 23% of the sightings were unexplained, their recommendation was that the project be reduced in scope (Dolan, 2002, p. 77; Steiger, pp. 217 - 258). They also mentioned a belief they would revisit in the future; that enemy forces, whoever those enemies might be, could somehow disguise a missile or bomber attack by flooding the reporting systems with UFO sightings. With their report finished and published, and with the

conclusion there was nothing in these flying saucer sightings, very little work was being done at Grudge (Blue Book Microfilm files, roll 85). The officers there expected that the investigation would be terminated.

To make the situation worse for those who held out a belief in flying saucers, reporter Bob Considine wrote an article for *Cosmopolitan* that also mentioned a belief that is still alive today. He suggested that UFO witnesses were “screwballs” and “true believers.” His analysis of the Montana Movie, explored later, suggested that the photographer, Nick Mariana, was one of those screwballs. It resulted in a lawsuit (Kolman, 1953).

The negative publicity, just what the Air Force wanted, caused Project Grudge to be reduced to one investigator. That is not to say that the reduction to Grudge was a result of the article, but it certainly didn’t change any attitudes inside the Air Force, especially at the highest levels. They weren’t going to waste any more resources on these investigations than they had to (Swords, 78 – 84). They had the backing of the press and feared no repercussions from their decision.

At around that same time that Grudge was dying, there was a series of sightings involving UFOs and radar at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey (Clark 2018, pp 513 – 515; Swords, pp. 124 – 128: Dolan 2002, pp. 91 – 93; Peeples, 64 – 65; Ruppelt, pp. 124 – 129; Blue Book Microfilm files, Roll 8, Case 977) On September 11, 1951, at 11:10 a.m. a student radar operator demonstrating the radar functions for others picked up a fast-moving, unidentified object. The object was southeast of Monmouth and seemed to be following the coastline. The radar operator thought that the object was traveling at 700 miles an hour, which was faster than most conventional aircraft of the time.

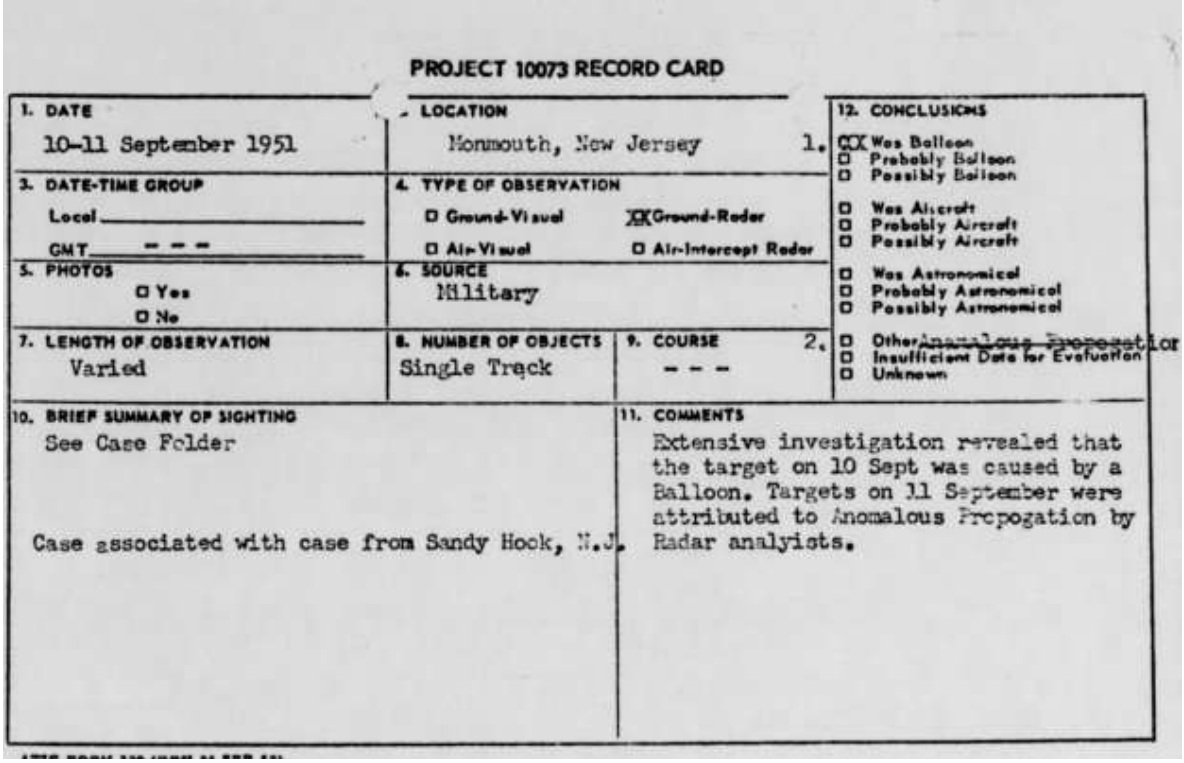
Twenty-five minutes later, Lieutenant Wilbert S. Rogers along with Major Edward Ballard flying a T-33 jet trainer, spotted a silver object that was about the size of a jet fighter. Rogers thought it was flying at 900 miles an hour. Rogers told the Air Force investigators:

> When first sighted, I would judge that it was between 5 and 8,000 feet over Sandy Hook [New Jersey] … It appeared to be descending when I first saw it at Sandy Hook and appeared to level out in flight just north of Red Bank, New Jersey, and continued on at the same altitude until it disappeared. At the point of our first sighting of the object, I started a descending 360 - degree turn to the left from 20,000 feet to 17,000 feet, gaining air speed from 450 mph to 550

mph on a course paralleling that of the object until it was lost from sight.

In our training and daily practice as intercept pilots, we must note accurately the times at which the object of the interception is first sighted. I did this automatically when I first sighted the object over Sandy Hook and noted the time to be approximately 1135 EDT, 10 September 1951. Although we were on a direct course for the destination at Mitchell, AFB [New York] at 20,000 feet at the time of the sighting, I was so amazed at the speed of the object that I immediately started the turn to the left and waited for Maj. Ballard to get through with the radio conversation he was having… so I could point the object to his attention, and we both watched it make a 90 – degree turn to the left and kept it under observation together while it covered approximately 20 miles and disappeared out to sea. The object appeared to be banking as its course described a radial [sic] 90 – degree turn to the left.

At 1:30 that afternoon, still September 11, radar picked up another unidentified object. Radar showed that it was 10,000 yards away (just over five and two thirds miles). They tracked the object as it climbed vertically at a high rate of speed and then flew off so fast that it was lost to the radar's automatic tracking system, a comment on which the skeptics would later hang part of their analysis. At one point, when it seemed the object was hovering, they did go outside to look for it but the sky was overcast. They couldn't see anything visually. Project Grudge investigators would conclude that the sighting was caused by "anomalous propagation" which is a fancy way of saying it was caused by the weather.



PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD

1. DATE: 10-11 September 1951

LOCATION: Monmouth, New Jersey 1.

3. DATE-TIME GROUP: Local ____ GMT - - -

4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION: ☐ Ground-Visual ☒ Ground-Radar ☐ Air-Visual ☐ Air-Intercept Radar

5. PHOTOS: ☐ Yes ☐ No

6. SOURCE: Military

7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION: Varied

8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS: Single Track

9. COURSE: - - - 2.

10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING: See Case Folder

Case associated with case from Sandy Hook, N.J.

11. COMMENTS: Extensive investigation revealed that the target on 10 Sept was caused by a Balloon. Targets on 11 September were attributed to Anomalous Propogation by Radar analyists.

12. CONCLUSIONS:
☒ Was Balloon
☐ Probably Balloon
☐ Possibly Balloon
☐ Was Aircraft
☐ Probably Aircraft
☐ Possibly Aircraft
☐ Was Astronomical
☐ Probably Astronomical
☐ Possibly Astronomical
☐ Other Anomalous Propogation
☐ Insufficient Data for Evaluation
☐ Unknown

Fort Monmouth Project Card

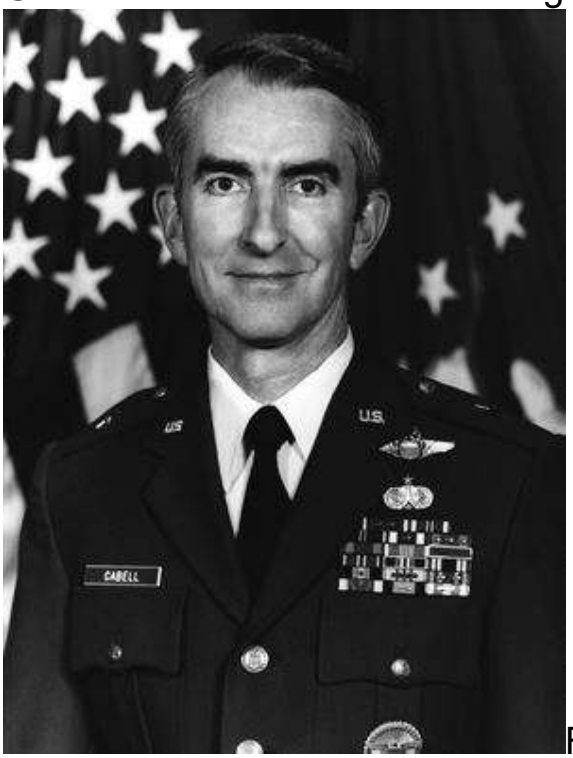
Just under two hours later, at 3:15 p.m., a second sighting was made by radar. This was a slow-moving object and was later identified as a balloon. That explanation is listed in the Blue Book index. The next day, at 10:50 a. m., two radars picked up an object moving too fast to be tracked automatically. It was a very strong return and the radar operators believed that the object was moving at 1000 miles an hour which is faster than the speed of sound.

As noted, at the time of these sightings, no one assigned to Grudge was doing much of anything. The belief was that there was nothing to the flying saucers, and there was no reason to waste resources on the investigations of them. The chief at ATIC, General Harold Watson and the man running Grudge, James Rodgers (not to be confused with the T-33 pilot), were telling Major General Charles Cabell, the chief of Air Force intelligence in Washington, that the investigations were on-going. The truth, however, was something other than that. What Watson and Rodgers did when they received a report was ridicule it without asking any questions about it or determining anything about the reliability of the information contained in it. Then, in grand military tradition, they filed it. Once it was filed, they believed their obligation had ended and their duty

had been done. No further action was contemplated and the case could be forgotten.

A problem arose here because Bob Ginna was doing research for an article for *Life* to cover the flying saucers. He discovered that the UFO project was doing virtually nothing. Watson was so embarrassed by what Ginna found that he reassigned

Major General Charles Cabell. Photo courtesy USAF.



Rodgers and put First Lieutenant Jerry Cummings in charge of the UFO project. Ginna should have noticed, and probably did, that Cummings, while having the proper academic credentials for such research, was a very low-ranking officer. If the project was to gain any sort of prestige, it should have been led by a field grade officer rather than a lieutenant. That wouldn't happen for years.

With all this sort of intrigue going on, the Monmouth report, a somewhat detailed analysis of the sightings, was given to Watson's chief of intelligence, Colonel Brunow Feiling, who sent the report, not to Cummings or Cummings' immediate superior, Lieutenant Colonel N. R. Rosengarten, but to Captain Roy James, a radar expert serving with ATIC. This report eventually found its way to Rodgers.

At some point Rosengarten heard that some significant document had not found its way to him and he complained to Colonel Brunow Feiling, division chief of the Technical Analysis Division. He, in turn, saw that he received a copy of the report. Cummings, who was at the very

bottom of the totem pole, was then shown a copy and he went to see James and Rodgers who were laughing about the sighting. They had already solved the mystery. The radar operators were just a bunch of kids who were not that experienced and the T-33 crew had been fooled by a reflection inside the cockpit canopy. Watson had endorsed that solution because, well, it was a solution and that ended the problem. The case could now be filed away.

There was, according to Ed Ruppelt who would become the chief of Project Grudge in the months to come, an argument in Feiling's office and it ended when they placed a call to General Cabell, who held some of the responsibility for the UFO investigations (Ruppelt, 126 – 127). Unfortunately, Cabell wasn't there but his assistant was surprised that there wasn't a team of investigators on their way to Fort Monmouth already to actually investigate the sightings. In the military, it would be assumed that Cabell's assistant would be speaking with the authority of the general. That meant that an investigation would have to be mounted and it would have to be mounted quickly. The file was opened and the case removed.

With that, Cummings and Rosengarten were ordered from Wright-Patterson in Ohio to Fort Monmouth in New Jersey. They spent September 13 interviewing the witnesses. But this is not the important point of all this. Once Cummings and Rosengarten finished their interviews, they flew on to Washington to brief Cabell personally about what they had found.

There was a meeting already in progress about what was going on at Fort Monmouth when they arrived. There were both high-ranking officers in the room and a man, Robert Johnson, who was there to suggest that a group of scientists and businessmen believed that the Air Force program dealing with UFOs wasn't very good. The meeting wasn't just about the lousy job being done with the investigations, but with the attitudes of those who were responsible for the investigations. The whole thing, from nearly top to bottom was filled with those who didn't believe and who couldn't be bothered with doing anything other than ignoring the problem.

At this point Cabell asked Cummings to tell him what was going on with the investigations at Blue Book specifically. Cummings, according to a private wire recording of the meeting that Ruppelt listened to several times before it was destroyed, said that the meeting was acrimonious

(Ruppelt, 126). A portion of this was published in Jerome Clark's *UFO Encyclopedia, Second Edition*:

> Jerry [Cummings and not Clark) told me that he looked at Rosy [Rosengarten] and got the OK signal, so he cut loose. He told how every report was taken as a huge joke; that at the personal direction of Watson, Rogers [meaning Rodgers], Watson's #1 stooge, was doing everything to degrade the quality of the reports; and how the only analysis consisted of [Rodgers's] trying to think up new and original explanations that hadn't been sent to Washington before. [Rodgers] couldn't even find half the reports. [This is confirmed by the number of early reports that are listed in the master index as "case missing."]

This, of course, suggests that many of the solutions that had been appended to sightings prior to this meeting were of no value, and other, possibly good sightings had been lost in the process, maybe purposefully. It suggests that while the Air Force was pretending to investigate UFO sightings, they were ignoring them at several levels and if they couldn't ignore them, they belittled them and once they were done with that, they sometimes filed them. Note that they sometimes filed them. Other reports have just disappeared and the early years of the official UFO investigation index provide a name, location and solution along with the note, "case missing."

Cabell, upon hearing all this, was furious. He wanted to know, "Who in the hell has been giving me these reports that every decent flying saucer sighting is being investigated."

As the discussion continued, Cabell's outrage increased. He yelled, "I've been lied to… I want an open mind… In fact, I order an open mind. Anyone who doesn't have an open mind can get out now."

Cummings and Rosengarten were sent back to Wright-Patterson and ATIC with orders to revitalize the UFO project. Cummings was about to leave active military service and Ed Ruppelt, who was an aeronautical engineer by college training and who had been a bombardier in the Second World War, who had been studying the Soviet air order of battle, found himself drafted into the UFO program, something that he had been watching unofficially anyway.

Even with the renewed interest in the UFO project, and with a general's mandate to complete the investigations in an unbiased fashion, the ultimate solution to the Monmouth case, according to the files

released decades later, “Extensive investigation revealed that the target on 10 Sept was caused by a Balloon. Targets on 11 September were attributed to Anomalous Propagation by Radar analysts [sic].”

Skeptics who later investigated the sightings, including Curtis Peebles who wrote about it in *Watch the Skies*, believed the case was eventually solved. Peeples wrote:

> It took time to sort out the Fort Monmouth sightings. The first radar sighting was due to the student’s error. He had not followed the correct procedure for putting the radar on automatic tracking. The target was an ordinary airplane. (The only “proof” the object was flying at high speed was the inability of the radar to automatically track it.) The T-33 sighting was caused by a balloon. The second radar sighting was also a balloon. The frantic phone call from headquarters was to settle a bet on how high it was. The two radar sightings on the second day were caused by another balloon and by weather. A layer of warm, humid air over one of cool, dry air can cause radar signals to bend, strike the ground and be reflected back. The objects also seem to travel at high speed. This illusion was completed by the operator’s belief that something strange was going on.”

Peebles cited Ruppelt’s book, *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects*, but the page numbers Peebles used didn’t track with the edition held by others. However, Ruppelt did write essentially the same thing about the Fort Monmouth case in his book. But Ruppelt also noted in that wire recorded interview that the two pilots thought those at ATIC were nuts for the solution and the Grudge Special Report No. 1 explained the sighting as “probably a balloon.”

There are, however, a few disturbing things in the Air Force report on these sightings. It is clear that even though this was supposed to be an unbiased investigation, there is a tone that suggests otherwise that isn’t revealed in Ruppelt’s book. It is clear that even though Cummings and Rosengarten were dispatched at the insistence of General Cabell, there were problems with the investigation. In one of the reports, in discussing the telephone call from a higher headquarters to the radar station, they suggest it was to settle a pool about the altitude of a balloon. It involved seven officers who each put a dollar into the pool, according to the official documents. But the attitude can be seen in the final line of that paragraph. It said, “So much for Item 2, Paragraph 2.”

The possible identification of the UFOs in the Fort Monmouth case is not the important feature here. It was the briefing that was given to Cabell and his reaction to learning that he had not be receiving the reports that he thought he had been. He was not pleased to learn that the information was being filtered and that the investigation was virtually dead. Cabell ordered an immediate change.

That change was slow to be implemented, however. As noted, Ruppelt was appointed to lead Grudge and began to streamline the system. He reviewed the prior investigations, organized the files, and even hired a clipping service so that they would receive reports that hadn't been reported to the Air Force through any other channel. He was the one who invented the term "UFO" though others before him had called the flying saucers "Unidentified Flying Objects." He was interested in learning what was going on as opposed to explaining every sighting that was submitted to them. But Ruppelt's tenure lasted less than two years.

Dr. H. P. Robertson

In January 1953, the CIA sponsored a panel, known as the Robertson Panel, to "investigate" UFOs. After the five-day meeting, the members offered a number of suggestions including that the "mystique" of the UFO be stripped from them by "debunking". They believed that proper investigation would lead to answers or solutions for every sighting. This was the end of investigations that searched for answers; it was the beginning of another search for any solution that sounded plausible. In fact, it just had to be barely possible to be accepted (Swords and Roberts, 193 – 194).

Dr. J. Allen Hynek

Slowly, under various officers, Project Blue Book

became little more than a public relations operation. They issued press releases designed to explain everything and regulations were written, first AFR 200-2 and then AFR 80-17, that ordered members of the military and those who investigated the UFO sightings to release information if there was a simple, good explanation for it (Gillmor, 819 – 828). If there was none, then no information could be released. The media was to be told that the investigation was “on going,” and any further information would be issued by the Pentagon.

By the middle of the 1960s, the Air Force was pushing to get out of the UFO business. They were being hammered by the media, civilian research organizations and the general public. Sightings in Socorro, New Mexico, by a police officer, and later in Michigan, by dozens of people grabbed national attention and eventually Congressional interest.

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, who was the scientific consultant to the UFO projects, almost from the beginning, was told of the possible UFO landing in Michigan. The Air Force didn’t know anything about it because no report had been made through proper channels and if there was no report through channels, then the sighting didn’t officially exist. A “Memo for the Record,” however, noted that 40 or more people including a dozen police officers near Ann Arbor, Michigan, had called the police to report a UFO landing Project Blue Book files, Case No. 10,252, Roll 60). They reported blinking lights and that one of the objects rose above the trees only to dip back down.

In a case examined in depth later, a farmer, Frank Mannor and his son, Ronnie, said they approached to within 400 or 500 yards of the object. They stopped and stared. Ronnie finally broke the silence and as he did, the lights of the UFO blinked off. Ronnie, with his father not far behind, ran up a slight knoll, and spotted the object now growing red. They watched it for a few minutes, then the light went out, and the object took off with a whine like a ricocheting bullet. Mannor later drew a picture of a football-shaped object of “waffle” metal, blinking lights and an antenna

Policemen saw a formation of 4 or 5 objects, and said that one had flown over their car. With the police involved in such numbers there was a certain credibility to the sightings, but the Air Force, still without official notification, refused to act.

Hynek, along with two enlisted members of the Air Force eventually traveled to Michigan for the investigation. Almost immediately, Hynek, too

much derision, thought that swamp gas might explain the sightings. After all, Mannor's sighting was in a marshy area. Mannor, and most of the population, didn't think much of Hynek's solution. The Air Force, never one to reject a solution if they could help it, accepted that and that is the solution that was eventually applied to the sightings.

The real problem with the Air Force investigations, however, was revealed during this case. By 1966, very few people accepted anything the Air Force had to say about UFOs. Although many sightings were, in fact, explained by mundane objects and phenomena, too many cases were simply labeled "Insufficient Data for a Scientific Analysis," as a way of ignoring them. Others were "solved" with answers that did not fit all the facts. Hynek's suggestion of swamp gas had been picked up by reporters and offered as the identification for the UFOs. The whole case will be examined in greater detail later.

Given this, the Air Force realized that they needed to do something to increase their credibility and to get out from under what they saw as the problem of flying saucers. Project Blue Book had become a public relations nightmare and nearly everyone, including much of the news media were having trouble accepting Air Force solutions to sightings.

The solution for this dilemma, which had been suggested for years, was to find an impartial organization, a university for example, to study UFOs and then conclude it the way the Air Force wanted concluded. In the administrative files of Blue Book, there are dozens of letters from dozens of Air Force and government officials, suggesting this very idea. Those documents recommend that as part of the study, a civilian team, those university professors and investigators, needed to claim that there was no threat to national security, that the Air Force had done a good job in their investigations, and recommend that Project Blue Book be closed.

Dr. Edward U. Condon of the University of Colorado was finally selected and accepted the grant of half a million dollars to begin the scientific investigation. Although it was wrapped in the trappings of science and alleged impartial research, the truth is that the conclusions for the study had been laid out in a letter from Lieutenant Colonel Robert Hippler to Dr. Robert Low of the University of Colorado prior to the beginning of the research. The letter, dated January 16, 1967, said, in part:

> While there exist some things which may forever remain unknowable in the universe, certainly extraterrestrial visitation must

fall into the “knowable” category. An alien would not come light years merely to pick up surreptitiously some rocks, or melt holes in reservoir ice (al la Edwards) [a reference to Frank Edwards and a New Jersey case where a UFO had hovered over an ice-covered reservoir melting some of the ice]. He would have long since gone through the geological bit and would be fairly knowledgeable of the make-up of stars and planets. You have stated that President Truman was unaware of the Manhattan Project until he became President. In that same period, physicists not connected with the project were aware of the possibilities and know that something was going on.

No one knows of a visitation. It should therefore follow there has been no visitation to date. As you are aware, if UFOs are an Air Force “sacred cow,” the other services in the usual competitive spirit would not be constrained by this “sacred cow.” Nor is the “fear of panic” holding anyone’s tongue. No one is reticent about the horror of an ICBM attack. Words such as “end of civilization” have been used many times.

This brings us to the second item. When you have looked into some sightings and examined some Blue Book records and become acquainted with the true state of affairs, you much consider the cost of the Air Force program on UFOs, and determine if the taxpayer should support this for the next decade. It will be at least that long before another independent study can be mounted to see if the Air Force can get out from under this program. If the contract is up before you have laid the proper groundwork for a proper recommendation, an extension of the contract would be less costly than another decade of operating Project Blue Book.

It was clear what was going to happen. Condon, in fact, about 18 months before the end of the study, told a group in at the Corning Glass Works, that “It is my inclination right now to recommend that the government get out of this business [UFO investigation]. My attitude right now is that there’s nothing to it… but I’m not supposed to reach a conclusion for another year. (Swords and Roberts, p. 331; Olive, 1967)” This just seemed to underscore the “plot” to get rid of the UFO investigation.

By this point, with the University of Colorado investigating UFO sightings, Project Blue Book was no longer a fully national operation.

First Lieutenant Carmon Ramaro, the last officer assigned to Blue Book, told me that UFO sightings were investigated by officers from the closest Air Force base if they were investigated at all. Most of the sightings listed in the index for the last several months of 1968 and 1969 were from the area around Dayton, Ohio, where Blue Book was based. Of course, the handwriting was on the wall. Blue Book and the public Air Force investigation was doomed.

On December 17, 1969, after Condon's report had been submitted, the Air Force announced that it was closing Project Blue Book. After twenty-two years, they had found no evidence that UFOs posed a threat to national security and that nothing of a scientific nature could be learned by further study. By January 1970, there was no Project Blue Book.

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Chapter 2: July 4, 1947

On July 4, 1947, just days after the Kenneth Arnold saw his nine objects in “fast flight” (*Cedar Rapids Gazette*, 1947), there were a series of sightings over several northwest states that Air Force officers labeled as either “Insufficient Data for a Scientific Analysis,” or as “Unidentified (Blue Book).” These involved police officers and airline flight crews as well as local civilians. Many of the reports were independent of one another, but can be linked by location, time of day, and other factors. Combined, rather than separated, they make a powerful statement about the nature of the flying saucers.

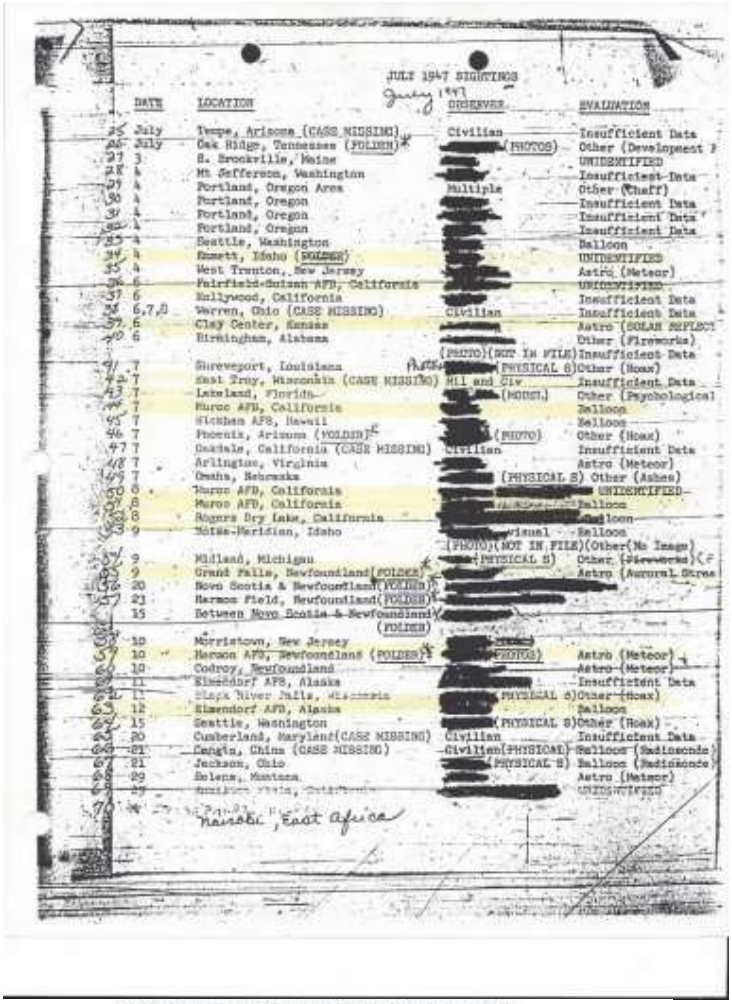
The first sighting of the day, in Portland area, might have been made by Harry Hale, the production manager of *The Oregonian*. He said that he had seen a shiny object in the sky just west of Beaverton. It was moving swiftly in a southerly direction and just disappeared. This was not part of the Blue Book file on the case, though the information did appear in one of the newspaper clippings that was part of that file. (*Portland Oregonian*, July 5, 1947)

The first of the civilian reports made to what was then Project Sign (Project Blue Book Files, Case 28, Roll 1), came from C. J. Bogne and several witnesses in the same car with him. They were north of Redmond, Oregon, at about 11:00 a.m., when the saw four disk-shaped objects flash past Mount Jefferson. According to Bogne, the disks made no noise and performed no maneuvers.

Two hours later, according to the Blue Book Files, at about 1:00 p.m., Don Metcalfe, an Oak Amusement Park employee, saw a lone disk fly overhead. He told the park superintendent, William LeRoy, what he had seen. LeRoy was unable to offer any corroboration for the sighting.

A few minutes later, just after 1:00 p.m., police officer Kenneth A. McDowell, who was near the Portland Police Station, noticed that the pigeons began fluttering as if frightened. Overhead he saw five large disks east of the city. According to the report he gave to military officers, three disks were flying east and two were heading to the south. All were flying at high speed and all appeared to be oscillating. McDowell alerted other police officers in an “all car alert” and they immediately broadcast the information over the police radio.

Two other police officers, Walter A. Lissy and Robert Ellis, after hearing the broadcast, stopped near a park. Overhead they saw three disks, moving at high speed. Neither heard any sound but both did see flashes of brightness that could have been sunlight reflecting from a metallic surface. According to them, the objects moved erratically and changed their direction of flight. They were in sight for about thirty seconds. Both men were veterans of the Second World War and both were civilian pilots which suggested they had some experience around aviation and aviation assets.


JULY 1947 SIGHTINGS

DATE	LOCATION	OBSERVER	EVALUATION
25 July	Tempe, Arizona (CASE MISSING)	Civilian	Insufficient Data
26 July	Oak Ridge, Tennessee (FOLDER)	[redacted] (PHOTOS)	Other (Development ?
27 3	S. Brookville, Maine	[redacted]	UNIDENTIFIED
28 4	Mt Jefferson, Washington	[redacted]	Insufficient Data
29 4	Portland, Oregon Area	Multiple	Other (Chaff)
30 4	Portland, Oregon	[redacted]	Insufficient Data
31 4	Portland, Oregon	[redacted]	Insufficient Data
32 4	Portland, Oregon	[redacted]	Insufficient Data
33 4	Seattle, Washington	[redacted]	Balloon
34 4	Emmett, Idaho (FOLDER)	[redacted]	UNIDENTIFIED
35 4	West Trenton, New Jersey	[redacted]	Astro (Meteor)
36 6	Fairfield-Suisun AFB, California	[redacted]	UNIDENTIFIED
37 6	Hollywood, California	[redacted]	Insufficient Data
38 6,7,8	Warren, Ohio (CASE MISSING)	Civilian	Insufficient Data
39 6	Clay Center, Kansas	[redacted]	Astro (SOLAR REFLECT
40 6	Birmingham, Alabama	[redacted]	Other (Fireworks)
		[redacted] (PHOTO)(NOT IN FILE)	Insufficient Data
41 7	Shreveport, Louisiana	[redacted] PHYSICAL S)	Other (Hoax)
42 7	East Troy, Wisconsin (CASE MISSING)	Mil and Civ	Insufficient Data
43 7	Lakeland, Florida	[redacted] (PHOTOS)	Other (Psychological
44 7	Muroc AFB, California	[redacted]	Balloon
45 7	Hickham AFB, Hawaii	[redacted]	Balloon
46 7	Phoenix, Arizona (FOLDER)	[redacted] (PHOTO)	Other (Hoax)
47 7	Glendale, California (CASE MISSING)	Civilian	Insufficient Data
48 7	Arlington, Virginia	[redacted]	Astro (Meteor)
49 7	Omaha, Nebraska	[redacted] (PHYSICAL S)	Other (Ashes)
50 8	Muroc AFB, California	[redacted]	UNIDENTIFIED
51 8	Muroc AFB, California	[redacted]	Balloon
52 8	Rogers Dry Lake, California	[redacted]	Balloon
53 9	Boise-Meridian, Idaho	[redacted] Visual	Balloon
		[redacted] (PHOTO)(NOT IN FILE)	Other(No Image)
54 9	Midland, Michigan	[redacted] PHYSICAL S)	Other (Fireworks)
55 9	Grand Falls, Newfoundland (FOLDER)	[redacted]	Astro (Auroral Stree
56 20	Nova Scotia & Newfoundland (FOLDER)	[redacted]	
57 21	Harmon Field, Newfoundland (FOLDER)	[redacted]	
58 15	Between Nova Scotia & Newfoundland (FOLDER)	[redacted]	
59 10	Morristown, New Jersey	[redacted]	
60 10	Harmon AFB, Newfoundland (FOLDER)	[redacted] (PHOTOS)	Astro (Meteor)
61 10	Codroy, Newfoundland	[redacted]	Astro (Meteor)
62 11	Elmendorf AFB, Alaska	[redacted]	Insufficient Data
63 11	Black River Falls, Wisconsin	[redacted] PHYSICAL S)	Other (Hoax)
64 12	Elmendorf AFB, Alaska	[redacted]	Balloon
65 15	Seattle, Washington	[redacted] PHYSICAL S)	Other (Hoax)
66 20	Cumberland, Maryland (CASE MISSING)	Civilian	Insufficient Data
67 21	Canglu, China (CASE MISSING)	Civilian (PHYSICAL)	Balloon (Radiosonde)
68 21	Jackson, Ohio	[redacted] PHYSICAL S)	Balloon (Radiosonde)
69 29	Helena, Montana	[redacted]	Astro (Meteor)
70 [illegible]	[illegible]	[redacted]	UNIDENTIFIED

Nairobi, East Africa

1Project Blue Book Index page for July 1947

Patrolman Earl Patterson, after hearing the broadcast, stopped to search for any of the disks. The broadcast had suggested that the saucers were “coming out of the sun,”

which meant they were coming from the direction of the sun. At first Patterson noticed nothing, but a few seconds later he saw one object coming out of the west and heading toward the southwest. He said that

the craft seemed to be either aluminum or eggshell white, and didn't flash or reflect the sun. He also said that that he didn't think they were airplanes. Like so many of the others, their flight path was erratic, wobbling and weaving. Patterson thought they were radio controlled rather than having a living pilot on board.

On the far side of the Columbia River, in nearby Vancouver, Washington, sheriff's deputies Sergeant John Sullivan, Clarence McKay and Fred Krives, also heard the alert broadcast, and ran outside to look for themselves. Over Portland, three to five miles away, they saw twenty to thirty disks that looked to them like a flight of geese. They heard a low humming sound which might, or might not, have been related to the objects.

Not long after that, three harbor patrolmen who had also been monitoring the police radio band, stepped outside. Captain K. A. Prehn, A. T. Austed and Patrolman K. C. Hoff, saw three to six disks traveling at high speed. They couldn't get a good count on the number because of the bright flashes surrounding them. According to the witnesses, the objects looked like huge chrome hubcaps and oscillated as they flew. Sometimes the witnesses could see a full disk, then a half-moon, and then nothing at all. They did see a plane overhead as well, but all the witnesses said they what they were watching was not an aircraft. This would cause Air Force investigations to wonder if aircraft might be a plausible explanation for the sightings despite the suggestion by the witnesses. They thought that something the plane's pilot did, such as tossing shiny disks from the cockpit might have caused the confusion and later in the day there was another report with a similar claim.

The Blue Book files contained a report that "a former aircorps [sic] veteran… said the object [he saw] was unlike any plane he'd ever seen. He thought it appeared radio controlled because the disk could change direction at a 90-degree angle without difficulty."

Another witness suggested that he had seen three objects fly east across the Willamette River. The objects did not appear to be very high, but they were traveling very fast. He said that they looked like a metallic disk glinting in the sun. He also said that he and a neighbor saw a single disk later that afternoon.

About 4:00 p.m., move civilians reported more disks. A woman called the police telling them she'd watched a single object as "shiny as a new dime, flipping around." An unidentified man called to say that he'd seen

three disks, one flying to the east and the two heading north. They were shiny, shaped like flattened saucers and were traveling at high speed.

About an hour later a man said that he spotted two white or silver objects flying southeast over Portland. Half an hour later he sighted a single disk heading to the northeast.

Captain E.J. Smith, Kenneth Arnold and co-pilot Ralph Stevens.

In Milwaukie, Oregon, not far from Portland, Sergeant Claude Cross reported three objects flying to the north. All were disk shaped and all were moving at high speed.

But disks overhead weren't the only things being reported. There were objects falling from the sky as well. Near Eugene, Oregon, a railroad cashier said he saw silvered disks being dropped out of a light plane flying over the city.

A man in Portland recovered a large piece of paper he had seen fall from great height. According to reports, the time that the paper fell coincided with some of the flying saucer sightings which might explain some of them.

The best of the sightings, and the one that was labeled as "unidentified," occurred about dusk as a United Airlines flight crew saw a single disk. Minutes later they spotted several others. Captain E. J. Smith, the captain of the flight, explained it this way:

> As our flight, No. 105, took off from Boise, Idaho, at 9:04 p.m., Pacific Time, the tower joshingly warned us to be on the lookout for flying saucers.

My co-pilot, Ralph Stevens… was in control shortly after we got into the air. Suddenly he switched on the landing lights.

He said he thought he saw an aircraft approaching us head-on.

I noticed the objects then for the first time.

We saw four or five “somethings.” One was larger than the rest and, for the most part, kept off the right of the other three or four similar, but smaller, objects.

Since we were flying northwest -roughly into the sunset – we saw whatever they were in at least partial light. We saw them clearly. We followed them in a northwesterly direction for about 45 miles.

Then I called the attendant at the Ontario, Oregon, radio tower, giving an approximate location and course for the objects. The attendant acknowledged our call, went outside to look, but was unable to see anything like what we described.

Finally, the object disappeared in a burst of speed. We were unable to tell whether they out sped [sic] us or disintegrated.

We never were able to catch them in our DC-3. Our air speed at the time was 185 miles per hour. Through the Boise air tower we radioed another United plane to see if it had seen anything. That plane, flying eastbound into the night, had not sighted them.

Because we were following the objects at roughly the same altitude, we can’t say anything about their shape except they were thin and were smooth on the bottom and rough-appearing on the top (Blue Book).

Smith called the flight attendant, Marty Morrow, to the cockpit to, in Smith’s words, “verify they were actually seeing the disks.” She saw four or more disks, three clustered together and a fourth flying off, in the distance, by itself. The objects were in sight for ten to fifteen minutes which means that she was able to get a good look at them.

Not everyone was convinced that the sightings were of unconventional aircraft. Colonel G. R. Dodson, a commander in the Oregon National Guard, told reporters that he had made an inspection of the area from the air but that he had found nothing suspicious (*Oregon Journal*, July 5, 1947).

Solutions were offered by some of the local residents. One thought that the sightings were the result of cottonwood blossoms drifting on the wind. Another complained about the news coverage, believing it all to be a hoax. He said that he had seen an airplane fly over and about a minute

later he saw what he believed to be bits of aluminum foil that might have been cigarette wrappers. Air Force officers mentioned that radar chaff had been seen in the area but offered no evidence to back up the claim. The idea that a private plane pilot was dropping small, silver disks, took on greater importance.

In the only news story that might have been of importance, the *Oregon Journal* noted that the "Only known airplanes in the area at the time of the reports were twenty-three B-29 bombers near Astoria." A formation of that size would have been difficult to misidentify, not to mention the roar that the engines would have caused.

Dr. James MacDonald, an atmospheric scientist, interviewed Smith, the United Airlines captain, about his sighting. In a prepared statement to United States House of Representatives, Committee on Science and Astronautics, Symposium of Unidentified Flying Objects in July 1968, MacDonald reported:

> Smith emphasized to me that there were no cloud phenomena to confuse them here and that they observed these objects long enough to be quite certain that they were no conventional aircraft. They "appeared flat on the bottom, rounded on top", he told me, and he added that there seems to be a perceptible "roughness" of some sort on top, though he could not refine the description. Almost immediately after they lost sight of the first five, a second formation of four (three in a line and a fourth off to the side) moved in ahead of their position, again traveling westward but at a somewhat higher altitude than the DC-3's 8000 ft. These passed quickly out of sight to the west at speeds which they felt were far beyond then-known speeds. Smith emphasized that they were never certain of sizes and distances, but that they had the general impression that these disc-like craft were appreciably larger than ordinary aircraft. Smith emphasized that he had not taken seriously the previous week's news accounts that coined the since-persistent term "flying saucer." But after seeing this total of nine unconventional, high-speed wingless craft on the evening of 7/4/47, he became much more interested in the matter. Nevertheless, in talking with me, he stressed that he would not speculate on their real nature or origin.

These reports were investigated by Army Officers at the time, though the reports seem to be fairly superficial. That is, there were objects seen

high in the sky for seconds or a minute or two. As part of the Project Grudge final report written in 1949, one of the officers wrote:

> This investigation can offer no definite hypothesis, but in passing would like to note these incidents occurred on the Fourth of July, and that if relatively small pieces of aluminum foil had been dropped from a plane over the area, then any one object would become visible at a relatively short distance. Even moderate wind velocities could give the illusion that fluttering, gyrating discs had gone by at great velocities. Various observers would not, of course, in this case have seen the same objects (Blue Book).

The officer also noted that “The above is not to be regarded as a very likely explanation but only as a possibility: the occurrence on these incidents on July 4 may have been more than coincidence. Some prankster might have tossed such objects out of an airplane as part of an Independence Day celebration.”

The thing that the Air Force did here was link the cases by date and location, but didn’t think of them as a continuation of one sighting. Once a police officer had alerted his fellow officers to the objects, they, in different locations and at different times, went outside or looked up and were able to spot them. The descriptions are of a similar type, disc-shaped object, flying alone or in formations. That they were seeing the same thing from different locations suggested something that was very high or that there was more than one formation.

The thing to be remembered that even if the police officers in one location are fooled by something, those officers observing it from a different perspective might have been able to identify it, if there was a terrestrial explanation for it. Since that didn’t happen, it would seem that there was something very strange going on here.

Add to this the sighting by Smith and his airline crew, which we can do because they observed the craft on the same day and in the same general location, and we have a new dimension to the case. Smith’s report was labeled as unidentified, meaning that he and his crew were able to give a detailed description of what they had seen. I have to wonder if that was because he was met by reporters when he landed. Had his report not received the attention it did, and had he not provided the detail he did, might it have ended up with only a little information and a label of “Insufficient Data for Scientific Analysis.”

Although the Air Force did gather a wide variety of information, and each of these cases, treated separately contained a letter to the weather bureau for weather data, it is interesting that every one of those letters is exactly the same. In the world today, that would have been a form letter printed out by a computer. In 1947, it meant that a secretary or secretaries had to type each one separately and there were a large number of these letters being sent out for sightings all over the country.

Astronomical data was also collected to rule out any sort of bright meteor though the lag in times suggest that could not be the source. The point is, the Air Force did not provide a solution for the sighting. They just kept it out of the unidentified category by suggesting there was insufficient data to identify it even though they interviewed many of the witnesses who were law enforcement officers. That means that the Air Force officers conducting the investigations had the opportunity to gather all the information they would have needed.

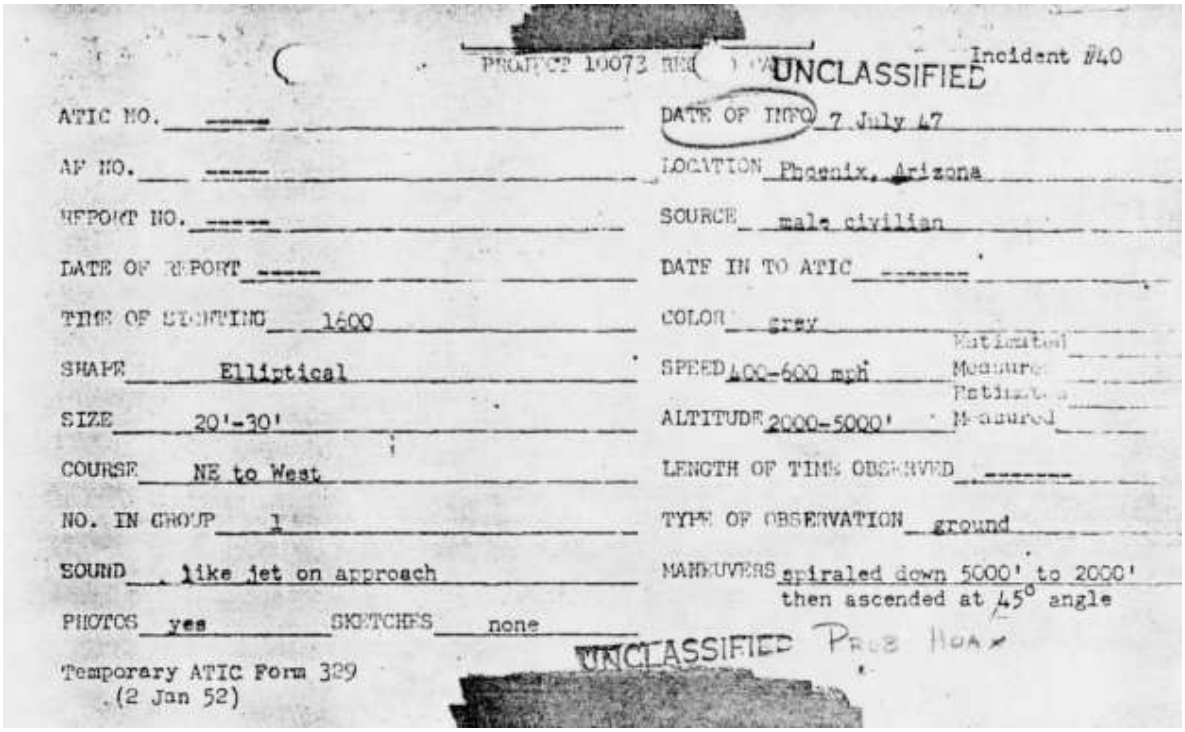
Army Air Forces investigators, who took the reports seriously in the summer of 1947, failed to find a satisfactory explanation for these sightings. It should be remembered that in this case there was nothing other than witness testimony, witnesses who were separated by distance but who, in some cases had been warned about the flying saucers by the police radio, and who had claimed to have seen, basically, the same thing. These sightings are interesting and we have to wonder what more might have been learned had a little more effort been made in the investigation of them.

SOURCES:

“Mysterious Objects Seen In Fast Flight.” *Cedar Rapids Gazette*, (June 26, 1947)

Project Blue Book, Roll No. 1, Case No. 29 - 34.

Chapter 3: The Rhodes Photograph: July 7, 1947



PROJECT 10073 [redacted] UNCLASSIFIED Incident #40

ATIC NO. -----
AF NO. -----
REPORT NO. -----
DATE OF REPORT -----
TIME OF SIGHTING 1600
SHAPE Elliptical
SIZE 20'-30'
COURSE NE to West
NO. IN GROUP 1
SOUND like jet on approach
PHOTOS yes SKETCHES none

DATE OF INFO 7 July 47
LOCATION Phoenix, Arizona
SOURCE male civilian
DATE IN TO ATIC -------
COLOR grey
SPEED 400-600 mph
ALTITUDE 2000-5000'
LENGTH OF TIME OBSERVED -------
TYPE OF OBSERVATION ground
MANEUVERS spiraled down 5000' to 2000' then ascended at 45° angle

UNCLASSIFIED Prob Hoax

Temporary ATIC Form 329
(2 Jan 52)

Project Card for the Rhodes Sighting

The Air Force officers at Project Blue Book eventually found a solution for this case that satisfied them and removed it from the list of the "Unidentifieds." They decided that William A. Rhodes, a self-employed scientist living in Phoenix, who claimed he had taken what might be considered the first good photographs of one of the flying saucers, had perpetrated a hoax (Blue Book). Once those officers had determined a solution, they had no desire complete their investigation or to revisit the sighting.

That, of course, doesn't mean that in 1947 they weren't initially puzzled by the case, or that they didn't take the report seriously. They did invest time and effort into the investigation that included the FBI, whose agent asked not to be identified as an FBI agent when he was introduced to Rhodes (Ibid.). For a time, there was great interest in Rhodes' photographs and story but pressure from the top of the chain of command eroded that interest.

Rhodes would first tell reporters and then various government investigators including those from the FBI and the Army's Counter Intelligence Corps, that he had been on his way to his workshop at the rear of his house when he heard a distinctive "whoosh" that he believed to be from a P-80 "Shooting Star" fighter jet (which was the fastest airplane at that particular moment). Overhead he saw something that didn't have the shape of a conventional aircraft. He hurried to his lab, grabbed his camera from the work bench and hurried outside to a small mound in his backyard.

William Rhodes in 1947

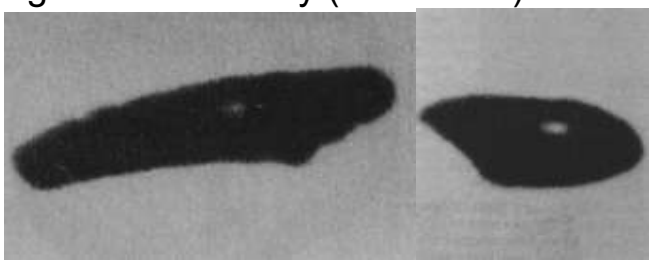
Rhodes sighted along the side of his camera, according to what he would later tell a newspaper reporter Robert C. Hanika, and took his first photograph. He estimated that the object was circling in the east. He advanced the film, and then hesitated, thinking that he would wait for the object to get closer. Worried that it would disappear without coming closer, he snapped the second picture, finishing the film role and his ability to record the event further.

Rhodes' story, along with the pictures, appeared in the Phoenix newspaper, *The Arizona Republic* on July 9. In that article Hanika, wrote, "Men long experienced in aircraft recognition studied both the print and the negative from which they were made, and declined to make a guess on what the flying object might be."

Hanika also wrote, "The marked interest Rhodes has for all aircraft has led most persons who have been in contact with other observers of the 'flying discs' to believe the photographs are the first authentic photographs of the missiles, since Rhodes easily can identify practically any aircraft."

Rhodes said that the object appeared to be elliptical in shape and to have a diameter of twenty to thirty feet. It appeared to be at 5000 feet when first seen and was traveling, according to Rhodes, at 400 to 600

miles an hour. It was gray which tended to blend with the gray overcast background of the sky (Blue Book).



The object had, according to Rhodes and a confidential report from the Project Blue Book files, "what appeared to be a cockpit canopy in the center which extended toward the back and beneath the object. The 'cockpit did not protrude from the surface but was clearly visible with the naked eye.'"

There were no propellers or landing gear, but there did seem to be trails of turbulent air behind the trailing points of the object. Speculation was that there were jet engines of some kind located there. The craft moved silently, although Rhodes had said originally said that a jet-like roar that called his attention to it.

The news stories apparently alerted the military to Rhodes' sighting. Various official investigations were launched. On July 14, 1947, Lynn C. Aldrich, a special agent for the Army's Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) in a memo for the record available in the Project Blue Book files wrote, "On 8 July 1947, this Agent obtained pictures of unidentifiable objects ... from the managing editor of the *Arizona Republic* newspaper. The pictures were taken by Mr. William A. Rhodes... [of] Phoenix, Arizona, at sunset, on 7 July 1947 (Ibid.)."

Then, on August 29, according to a "Memorandum for the Officer in Charge," George Fugate, Jr., a special agent of the CIC and stationed at Fourth Air Force Headquarters, interviewed Rhodes in person. Fugate was accompanied by Special Agent Brower of the Phoenix FBI Office. This interview is important because of some of the confusion about location of the negatives and prints of the photographs that would develop later.

The Flying Flapjack.

During the interview, Rhodes again told the story, suggesting that he thought, at first, it might have been the Navy's "Flying Flapjack" which had been featured on the May 1947 cover of *Mechanix Illustrated*. He rejected the idea because he saw no propellers or landing gear though the overall shape of the craft matched that of the “Flapjack.” Later research by various investigators, both military and civilian, showed that the Navy built two "Flapjacks" but neither had flown outside the Bridgeport, Connecticut area. The project was cancelled in 1947 as the Navy moved to jet powered aircraft.

At the end of Fugate's report, he wrote, "Mr. Rhodes stated that he developed the negatives himself. He still had the negative of the first photograph ... but he could not find the negative for the second photograph."

On February 19, 1948, Lewis C. Gust, the chief, Technical Project Officer, Intelligence Department (though the Project Blue Book files fail to identify the man or his organization beyond that), wrote what might be considered a preliminary report on the analysis of the photographs. "It is concluded that the image is of true photographic nature, and is not due to imperfections in the emulsion, or lack of development in the section in question. The image exhibits a 'tail' indicating the proper type of

distortion due to the type of shutter used,

[redacted]

UNCLASSIFIED

UNIDENTIFIABLE OBJECTS,
WILLIAMS FIELD, CHANDLER,
ARIZONA.

14 July 1947

MEMORANDUM FOR THE OFFICER IN CHARGE:

On 8 July 1947, this Agent obtained pictures of unidentifiable objects, (Exhibits 1 and 2) from the managing editor of the Arizona Republic newspaper. The pictures were taken by Mr. [redacted] Phoenix, Arizona, at sunset, on 7 July 1947. The Subject objects flew at unconceivable speeds, making three circles in the vicinity of Mr. [redacted] home. The pictures were taken with a box camera, size 620. The photograph (Exhibit 1) was taken as the object passed in front of Mr. [redacted] and Exhibit 2 as the object turned towards Mr. [redacted] The height of the object was estimated at 1000 feet.

AGENT'S NOTES: See Exhibits 1 and 2, photographs of unidentifiable objects, enlarged approximately 20 times. No further reports have been received by this office of objects seen by military personnel.

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

Lynn. C. Aldrich, Special Agent, EIC - AAF, FDTRC

UNCLASSIFIED

[redacted]

c o p y

Memo from the Blue Book file that was originally classified.

the speed of the object and the fixed speed of the shutter. This trailing off conforms to the general information given in the report."

On May 11, 1948, Rhodes was again interviewed but this time by high-ranking officials. Lieutenant Colonel James C. Beam, who worked with the chief of intelligence at Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio, Colonel Howard McCoy, and Alfred C. Loedding, who was a civilian employee at AMC and part of Project Sign (later Blue Book), traveled to Phoenix. They later wrote, "Although Mr. Rhodes is currently employed as a piano player in a night club, his primary interest is in a small but quite complete laboratory behind his home. According to his business card, this laboratory is called "Panoramic Research Laboratory and Mr. Rhodes is referred to as the 'Chief of Staff.' Mr. Rhodes appeared to be completely sincere and apparently is quite interested in scientific experiments."

In fact, that same report noted, "In subsequent correspondence to the reporter of this incident [that is Rhodes], the observer refers to himself as Chief of Staff of Panoramic Research Laboratory, the letterhead of which lists photography among its specialties. Yet, the negative was carelessly cut and faultily developed. It is covered with streaks and over a period of six months, has faded very noticeably."

The AMC opinion in the Project Grudge report which was prepared several years later and followed Langmuir's statement about the possibility of wind-blown debris, was, "In view of the apparent character of the witness, the conclusion of Dr. Langmuir [that the photographs be discounted as paper swept up by the wind] seems entirely probably (sic)."

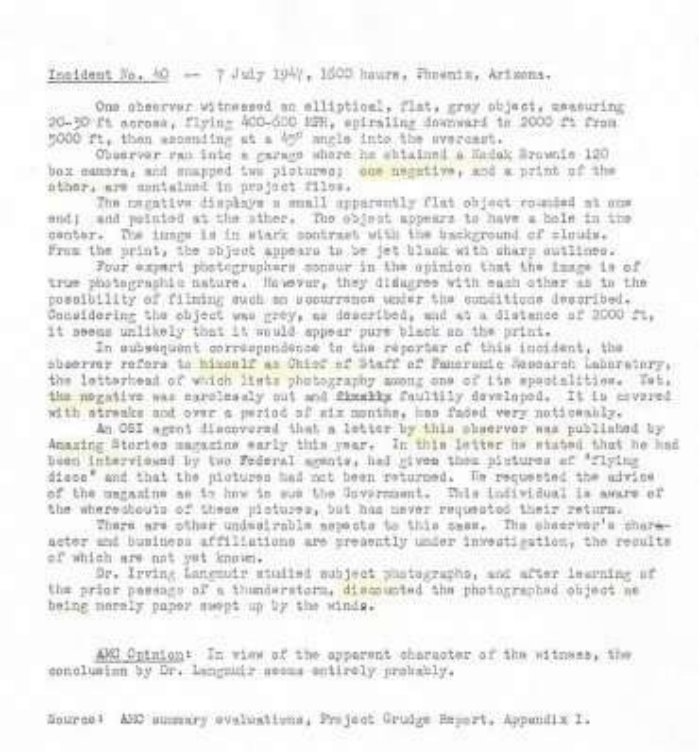
On June 5, 1952, now nearly five years after the pictures were taken, and before the massive publicity about UFOs was about to burst on the public consciousness with the Washington National Sightings, Colonel Arno H. Luehman, Deputy Director of Public Information wrote about "Declassifying Photographs of Unidentified Flying Objects." In the first paragraph of his letter, he wrote, "This office understands that two photographs were taken by Mr. William A. Rhodes of Phoenix, Arizona, and that these photographs were turned over to Fourth Air Force Intelligence in July of 1947. This office has been contacted by Mr. Rhodes who is requesting return of his original negatives (Blue Book)."

But the important part of the document comes at the end. Aldrich wrote, "...On the morning of August 30, 1947, when Mr. Rhodes called at the Phoenix office [of the FBI] to deliver the negatives, they were accepted only after he was advised that they were being given to Mr. FUGATE, a representative of the Army Air Force Intelligence, United

States Army, and that there was little, if any chance of his getting the negatives back. Mr. Rhodes turned them over to this office with the full understanding that they were being given to the Army and that he would not get them back."

On July 14, 1952, in still another letter, it was clear that the pictures and negatives were turned over to Army Air Forces intelligence representatives at Hamilton Field on August 30, 1947. In that document, they are attempting to trace the course of the pictures from Rhodes to the FBI to Army intelligence. What this suggests is that the Air Force wasn't sure of where the pictures and negatives were. They were attempting to shift the blame to others for the apparent loss of those pictures, including Rhodes himself.

The Grudge assessment of the Rhodes sighting.



Incident No. 40 -- 7 July 1947, 1600 hours, Phoenix, Arizona.

One observer witnessed an elliptical, flat, gray object, measuring 20-30 ft across, flying 400-600 MPH, spiraling downward to 2000 ft from 5000 ft, then ascending at a 45° angle into the overcast.

Observer ran into a garage where he obtained a Kodak Brownie 120 box camera, and snapped two pictures; one negative, and a print of the other, are contained in project files.

The negative displays a small apparently flat object rounded at one end; and pointed at the other. The object appears to have a hole in the center. The image is in stark contrast with the background of clouds. From the print, the object appears to be jet black with sharp outlines.

Four expert photographers concur in the opinion that the image is of true photographic nature. However, they disagree with each other as to the possibility of filming such an occurrence under the conditions described. Considering the object was grey, as described, and at a distance of 2000 ft, it seems unlikely that it would appear pure black on the print.

In subsequent correspondence to the reporter of this incident, the observer refers to himself as Chief of Staff of Panoramic Research Laboratory, the letterhead of which lists photography among one of its specialities. Yet, the negative was carelessly cut and ~~thumbs~~ faultily developed. It is covered with streaks and over a period of six months, has faded very noticeably.

An OSI agent discovered that a letter by this observer was published by Amazing Stories magazine early this year. In this letter he stated that he had been interviewed by two Federal agents, had given them pictures of "flying discs" and that the pictures had not been returned. He requested the advice of the magazine as to how to sue the Government. This individual is aware of the whereabouts of these pictures, but has never requested their return.

There are other undesirable aspects to this case. The observer's character and business affiliations are presently under investigation, the results of which are not yet known.

Dr. Irving Langmuir studied subject photographs, and after learning of the prior passage of a thunderstorm, discounted the photographed object as being merely paper swept up by the winds.

AMC Opinion: In view of the apparent character of the witness, the conclusion by Dr. Langmuir seems entirely probably.

Source: AMC summary evaluations, Project Grudge Report, Appendix I.

That same July 14 document, Gilbert R. Levy wrote, "A background investigation was run on Rhodes, by OSI, for the benefit of AMC [at Wright Field, Dayton, Ohio] which reflected Rhodes had created the name PANORAMIC RESEARCH LABORATORY, to impress people with his importance. He was reported to be a musician by trade, but had no steady job. Neighbors considered him to be an excellent neighbor, who caused no trouble, but judged him to be emotionally high strung, egotistical, and a genius in fundamentals

of radio. He conducts no business through his ‘Laboratory,’ but reportedly devotes all his time to research."

This means, simply, Rhodes had surrendered his photographs and negatives to the government and although they hint that Rhodes knew where they were, that simply isn't borne out in the documents. Even the Air Force officers didn't know where the photographs were. That was why there were letters written from one office to another.

There was never a clear conclusion to the identity of the object Rhodes photographed. The Air Force, apparently unnerved by the self-employed Rhodes, and his lack of visible means of support, at least to them, concluded the case was a hoax. They simply didn’t like Rhodes, he had apparently annoyed them in some fashion, which he tended to do with those in positions of authority. They were unaware that he had held several patents for his inventions and was receiving some sort of compensation for them that supplemented his other sources of income.

While all that could be considered the end of the Rhodes case with a good reason to label the case as a hoax, at least according to the various Air Force investigations, that certainly isn’t the whole truth and nothing but the truth. The Rhodes photographs were taken about two weeks after Kenneth Arnold had reported he saw nine objects near Mt. Rainier. Arnold’s sighting, for some reason, grabbed the attention of the news media, and became national news and then international news for several days. The Air Force’s ultimate conclusion was that Arnold had been fooled by mirages or blowing snow while most of those in the UFO community believed there was more to it than that. UFO researchers suggested that, at worst, the sighting was unidentified, meaning simply there was no good explanation for it and not that the cause was alien spacecraft.

The important aspect of this was that in Arnold’s original report and in the illustrations that he provided to the Army was of a heel-shaped object. It had a blunt, rounded nose and a slight concave feature in the rear. It looked more like the heel of a shoe than anything else. The drawing he made for the intelligence officers looked like the craft Rhodes had photographed.

This becomes important when we begin to talk about the Maury Island UFO landing hoax. The sighting allegedly took place on June 21, 1947, but it received no publicity, or interest, until after Arnold’s report exploded all over the newspapers and the world. George Earley, who

describes himself as an “Opinionated Oregonian,” and who had researched the Maury Island case for a number of years, published a four-part series in *UFO* magazine about it.

Although Maury Island itself has nothing to do with Rhodes, or Arnold for that matter, the facts are these. Two men, Harold Dahl and Fred Crisman, claimed to be harbor patrolman, but who were actually salvage operators, said that they had been working when six doughnut-shaped objects appeared overhead. Five of the six were circling one as if it was in some kind of trouble. While this was going on, Crisman took a series of pictures. One of the objects maneuvered to make contact with the one in trouble. There was a dull thud, and when contact was broken, the disabled craft spewed a soft, metallic substance. As the metal seemed to float down, another, harder metal that was also discharged fell on a beach on Maury Island. As they turned toward the island, this harder metal also fell to the boat, damaging it, killed a dog and injured Dahl’s son who was also on board.

NO. | 24-185-19

SUBJECT: (Unclassified) WILLIAM ALBERT RHODES, Information Concerning Flying Disc
SPECIAL INQUIRY

TO: Directorate of Intelligence, DCS/O

DATE 14 JUL 1952

UNCLASSIFIED

COMMENT NO. 1

FROM: Counter Intelligence Division
Dir. of Special Investigations, IG

Colonel Barnard/mb/Code 192
Ext 140 AFCSI-6

1. Information has been received from the FBI to the effect that a Mr. Fred Blumenthal, in the office of Drew Pearson, had contacted the Bureau, advising that Pearson had been in contact with Dr. W.A. Rhodes concerning photographs which Rhodes allegedly made of a Flying Disc in the vicinity of Phoenix, Arizona, in June of 1947.

2. Dr. Rhodes allegedly informed Drew Pearson that the FBI borrowed his negatives on the Flying Disc and that he had asked for their return. The FBI informed Rhodes that the negatives were not available.

3. The FBI informed Mr. Blumenthal that the FBI did not have in its possession the negatives referred to by Mr. Rhodes, and in fact Rhodes knew full well that the FBI turned them over to Air Force Intelligence representatives, Hamilton Field, on 30 August 1947, with the understanding that he might never have them returned.

4. Blumenthal was informed by the Bureau that the FBI did not investigate this matter and did not investigate Rhodes. Mr. Blumenthal stated he would contact OSI for what assistance they might be able to give him.

5. OSI has not received any inquiry from Mr. Pearson or any of his representatives.

6. For your information on 18 October 1949, a letter was received from OSI District 19, transmitting copies of the photographs taken by Rhodes, and advising that the originals were in custody of the Assistant Chief of Staff, A-2, Intelligence, Hamilton AFB, California. A background investigation was run on Rhodes, by OSI, for the benefit of AMC, which reflected that Rhodes had created the name PANORAMIC RESEARCH LABORATORY, to impress people with his importance. He was reported to be a musician by trade, but had no steady job. Neighbors considered him to be an

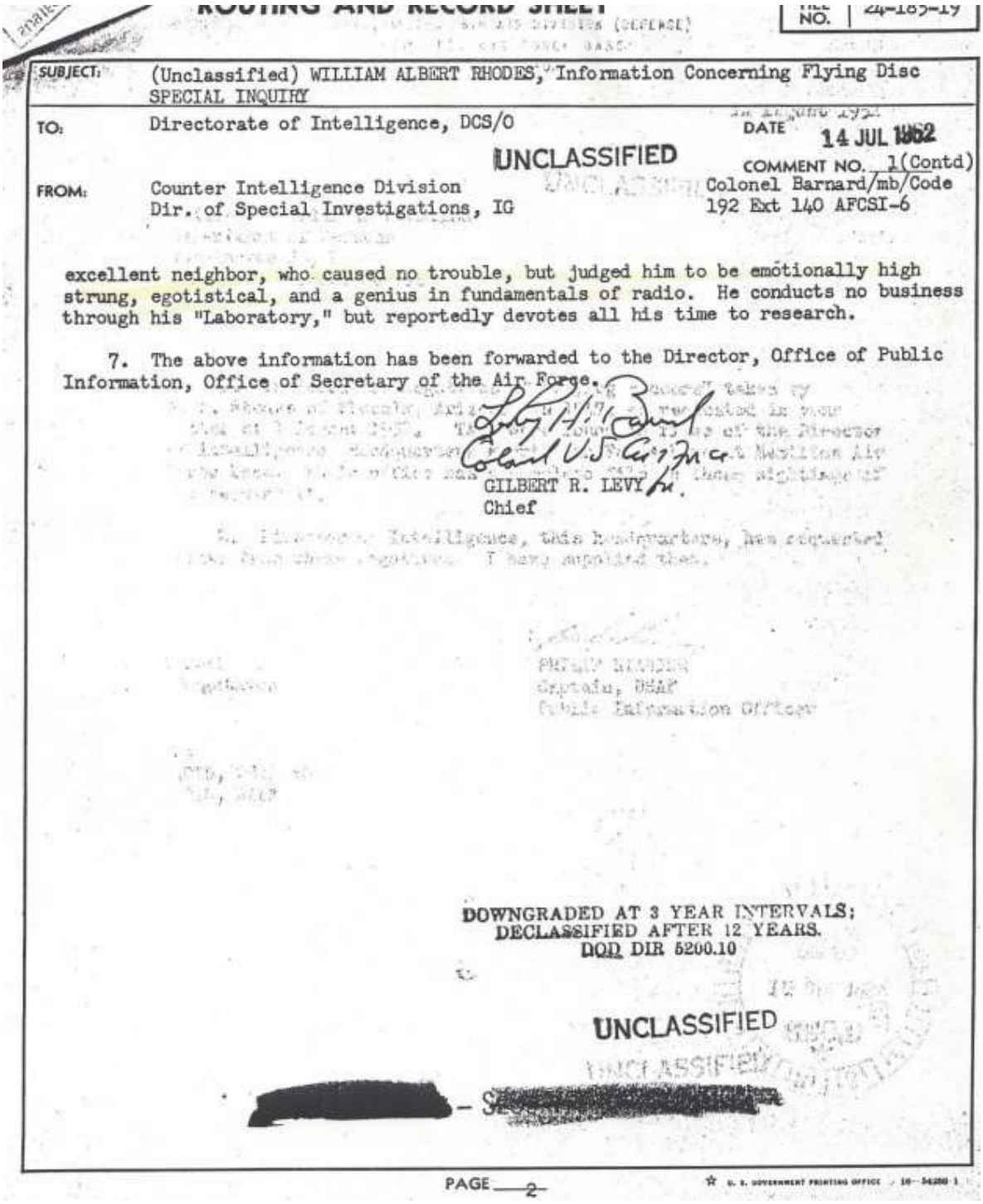
DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

UNCLASSIFIED

[redacted]

PAGE

Project Blue Book Letter mentioning the FBI.



ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

NO. 24-189-19

SUBJECT: (Unclassified) WILLIAM ALBERT RHODES, Information Concerning Flying Disc SPECIAL INQUIRY

TO: Directorate of Intelligence, DCS/O

DATE 14 JUL 1952

UNCLASSIFIED

COMMENT NO. 1(Contd)

FROM: Counter Intelligence Division
Dir. of Special Investigations, IG

Colonel Barnard/mb/Code
192 Ext 140 AFCSI-6

excellent neighbor, who caused no trouble, but judged him to be emotionally high strung, egotistical, and a genius in fundamentals of radio. He conducts no business through his "Laboratory," but reportedly devotes all his time to research.

7. The above information has been forwarded to the Director, Office of Public Information, Office of Secretary of the Air Force.

GILBERT R. LEVY
Chief

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 2

Page 2 of the Letter.

Dahl and Crisman landed on the beach, gathered samples of the metal, and then headed out of the area at high speed. Dahl tried to advise his supervisor but was unable to make radio contact. Once they got to their base, they got first aid for the boy and told their supervisor

what happened. He didn't believe them. Dahl and Crisman took him to the island so that he could see the metal for himself, apparently before they took the boy to the hospital for medical treatment.

That wasn't the end of it either. The next day Dahl said that a man in a dark suit visited him at home. This man in black knew all about the incident and described it in detail for Dahl. He suggested that maybe it would be best if Dahl just forgot about it. To let the matter drop.

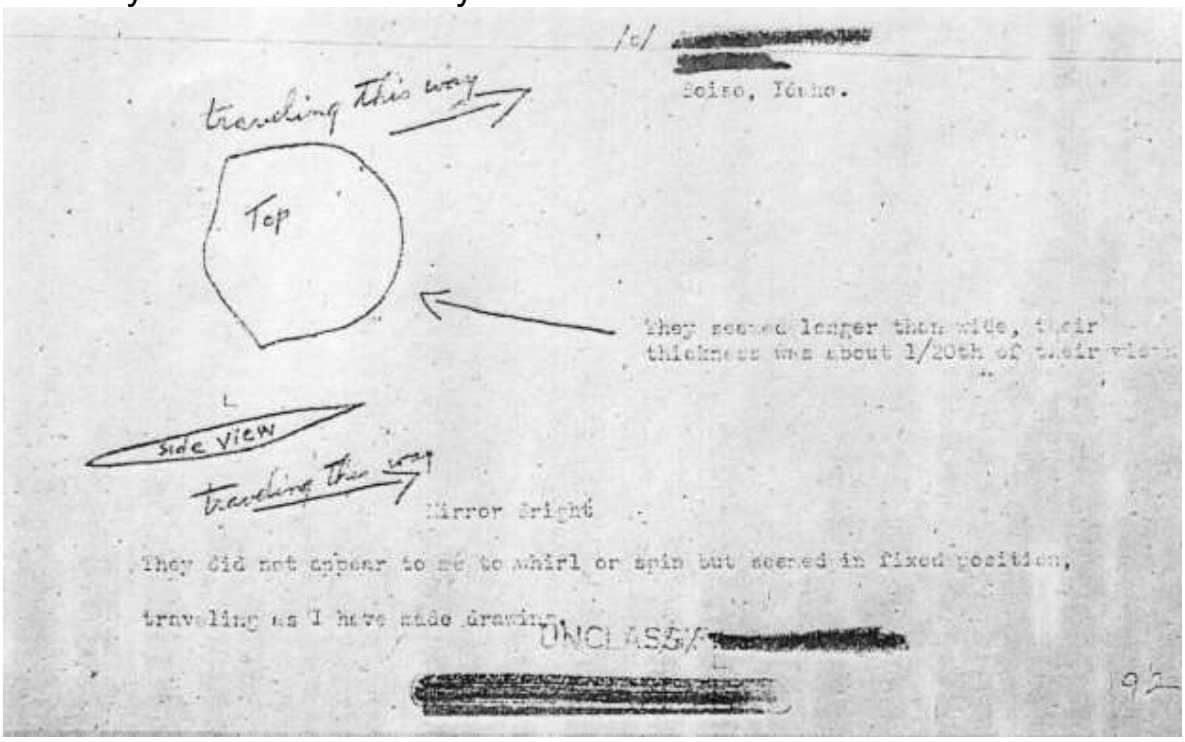
The next problem for the story was that the pictures that they had hoped would provide some credibility for the story didn't turn out. Dahl attempted to develop the film but it was badly fogged. Someone suggest that it had been exposed to a high level of radiation and that was the reason there were no useful images on the film. If that film was produced, that might provide a simple verification for the claim but that never happened.

Ray Palmer, editor of *Amazing Stories*.

At this point, Ray Palmer, the publisher of *Amazing Stories*, a science fiction magazine, learned of the case, probably from Crisman. Palmer, who had been in contact with Arnold and had convinced him to send him a copy of his Air Force report, called Arnold, offering him $200 to investigate the case. Arnold agreed but quickly decided that he had gotten himself in over his head. Arnold just wasn't sure what to do, but remembered that Lieutenant Frank Brown, who had investigated his sighting and who had told him, Arnold, to call if he had any questions. Arnold did just that. He called Brown at Hamilton Army Air Field in California, which was part of the Fourth Air Force.

Brown, with Captain William Davidson, took a B-25 and flew up to Tacoma, Washington, where Arnold was investigating Maury Island.

They all got together in Arnold's hotel room late in the evening where Arnold showed them the debris that had been recovered on Maury Island that Dahl and Crisman had given him. Both Army officers, Brown and Davidson, believed that the material was nothing more than smelter slag. They were unimpressed, but both men respected Arnold. They didn't tell him they believed the Maury Island tale to be a hoax.



Original drawing Arnold drawing of the object that he submitted to the Air Force.

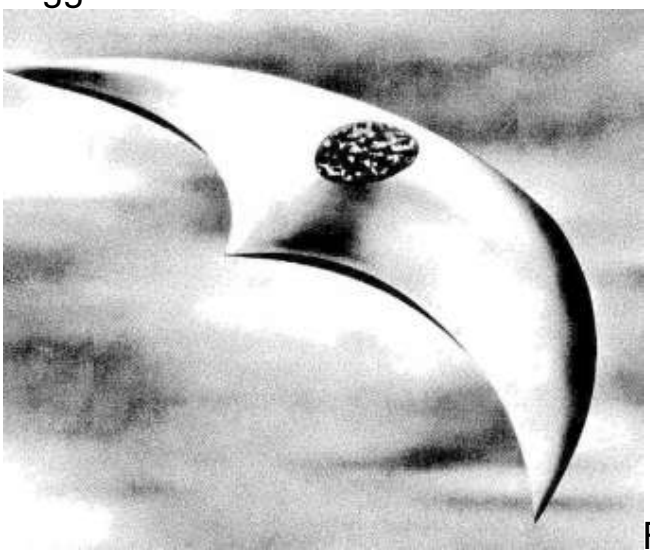
All this takes us back to Rhodes. According to Earley, Arnold asked the two officers what Army intelligence had learned about UFOs in the days after his sighting. Davidson, sat down and then drew a picture of an object. He told Arnold, "This is a drawing of one of several photographs we consider to be authentic."

Brown then added the information that tied it to the Rhodes photograph. He said, "It came from Phoenix, Arizona the other day. We have prints of it at Hamilton Field, but the original negatives were flown to Washington, D.C."

It is clear that those pictures were the ones that Rhodes had taken since there are no other UFO photographs taken in July 1947 in Phoenix, Arizona. It is interesting that Brown mentioned Hamilton Field because Rhodes does the same thing. And Hamilton Field was part of the Fourth

Air Force in 1947, and Rhodes had communications with officers at Fourth Air Force about his photographs as well.

These statements, uttered so long ago by officers who would be dead a few hours later (their B-25 crashed and burned), doesn't mean much in and of itself. But still, it is an interesting bit of information buried in Earley's long story about the Maury Island hoax, a man who has long studied that case and is well-versed on the ins and outs of it. And it suggests that those at Hamilton



Stylized illustration of Arnold's craft.

Field and by extension, the Army Air Forces, had, originally taken the photographs as important and something real.

That was early in the investigation. Later they would decide that Rhodes story couldn't be trusted. In the AMC summary evaluations, as part of the Project Grudge Report, Appendix 1, their character assassination of Rhodes is evident. As mentioned, they noted, "In subsequent correspondence to the reporter of this incident, the observer [Rhodes] refers to himself as Chief of Staff of Panoramic Research Laboratory, the letterhead of which lists photography among one of its specialties. Yet, the negative was carelessly cut and faultily developed."

They also wrote, "there are other undesirable aspects to this case. The observer's character and business affiliations are presently under investigation, the results of which are not yet known."

The same report continued, "Dr. Irving Langmuir studied subject photographs, and after learning of the prior passage of a thunderstorm, discounted the photographed object as being merely paper swept up by the wind."

And then, as if to reinforce this character assassination, the report said, "AMC Opinion: In view of the apparent character of the witness, the conclusion by Dr. Langmuir seems entirely probably (sic)."

Of course, not mentioned is the complete discounting of the verbal report by Rhodes. He heard a whooshing sound which drew his attention to the craft which, of course, rules out paper blown by the wind. And you must discount the size, speed and altitude estimates provided by Rhodes, though most people, looking up at an object in the sky fail to correctly estimate much about it. But here there were clouds in the sky which gave, to some extent, a point of reference. And, in the second picture, there is some foreground detail.

In other words, the Air Force seemed to go out of its way to discredit Rhodes, suggesting that he was an egotistical man who lived off the income of his wife. Although the neighbors had said he was a good neighbor, the Air Force reported that he hated cats and dogs and had shot several animals that strayed onto his property. That doesn't sound like someone who is a good neighbor. It does suggest something about the Air Force bias.

And here's the flip side of this. Rhodes said that he had done experimental work with the Naval Ordnance Laboratory in Washington, D.C. during World War II. He returned to Phoenix in 1942 and worked as an instructor at Falcon Field.

However, Rhodes did hold multiple patents which suggested he wasn't quite the "weirdo" that the Air Force made him out to be. He seemed to be the genius that his neighbors believed him to be. And with patents often come licensing fees, which would be a source of income not readily seen by those who didn't know about it. There is nothing in the Air Force investigation that suggested they had looked at his tax returns to learn if his lab brought in any income.

Dr. James McDonald.

Dr. James McDonald investigated Rhodes in the 1960s and found that he held a variety of patents. According to a letter dated February 18, 1967, McDonald wrote, "...who has made a modest living off an impressive variety of inventions." McDonald, then, did what the Air Force couldn't, or didn't do, that is, verify Rhodes' creative genius.

It is quite clear from the files that the Air Force thought little of Rhodes and his "eccentric life style." They made fun of his lab and his research, suggesting he was an unemployed musician and mentioning little about his technical background. Clearly, he was a clever man who invented or modified a number of things and was granted patents on them. His talent was sought out by others in the academic community.

But the real problem here is that the Air Force was attempting to belittle the value of the photographs by careful character assassination of the photographer. Rhodes was a clever man, doing work at a Ph. D. level for the government during the Second World War, but when his name surfaced with UFO photographs, he became a crackpot who inflated his ego with his Panorama Research Laboratory and claiming degrees he had not earned.

In the mid-1960s, Dr. James E. McDonald corresponded with Rhodes about his case and the problems with his advanced degree. McDonald wrote to Richard Hall, of NICAP (and later of the Fund for UFO Research), on February 18, 1967 that:

> I did a lot of checking on Rhodes degrees, because there seemed something odd about an honorary Ph D based on the kind

> of work I could imagine him doing. Columbia said no record of any such degree. Geo. Washington said no record of a BA ever given to Rhodes in the period I specified. So I made a trip up there in December and spent an hour or so with him. Devoted most of my querying to the matter of the degree and his associations with inventory (sic), Lee DeForrest... He [Rhodes] showed me a photo-miniature in plastic of the alleged Columbia degree, and he said he had the original somewhere in his files but did not show it to me... As I kept going over the thing he finally volunteered the remark that he, himself, had checked with Columbia about a year after DeForrest presented him with the certificate, found no record of it, confronted DeForrest with the information, and was non-plussed by D F putting his arm over his shoulder and saying something to the effect, that, 'Well, my boy that's the way those things happen sometimes,' and saying no more about it... But the fact that he lists himself in the Phoenix phonebook as Dr. Wm Rhodes in the face of that history constitutes (sic) a cloud that would be impossible to overlook. Everything else checks out solidly in his story.

Trying to get to the truth in an event that happened over sixty years ago is difficult at best. While there is no question the photographs were taken by William A. Rhodes, there were multiple newspaper articles about them, and the Project Blue Book contained a thick file about them, most UFO researchers had never delved too deeply into them. Most just knew that the Air Force explanation of hoax was not based on any solid evidence.

The Air Force dismissed him as a fellow who lived off his wife’s income as a teacher and whatever he could make as a musician. They challenged his claim of a Ph.D. in a not very clever way, and suggested he was a crackpot not worthy of further discussion. All this proved that his pictures were faked.

The truth, however, isn’t quite as black and white as the Air Force made it out to be. Rhodes was considered to be a genius by many who knew him. James McDonald made it clear that Rhodes was an inventor who held a number of patents, some of which provided a "modest" income. The definition of modest income was not explained.

His claim of a Ph.D., issued by the government is a little more difficult to prove. There is no doubt that during World War Two he was given some sort of test and scored high enough to be assigned work at a

doctorate level. We still have that sort of thing in the world of the UFO. People who have not had the schooling, but who had worked at these high levels. Sort of a "brevet" degree, if you will.

But that was 1967 and it is not what he had said to others earlier. According to an Air Force Inspector General report of August 17, 1949, Rhodes apparently told the investigator, as well as neighbors that, "[He] wrote scientific articles for nationally known magazine [not identified by either Rhodes or the investigator] and received honorary Doctor of Science degree from [redacted but probably Columbia] University for this article."

So, here is a different version of how he came to obtain a doctoral degree without leaving the necessary footprint. And while some researchers would cut him some slack for the story told to McDonald, this different version is quite difficult to believe. It stretched credulity to the limit.

Now we go back to the Internet posting by Rhodes to explain his degree. The key sentences are these, "One day, my boss summoned me to his office and explained: ‘We have a total absence of degree'd doctorates, and having already passed requirements, you have been selected to receive a Ph.D. in Physics.’ The degree would be known by the nickname ‘90 Day Wonder’, and my work would not be disrupted to gain it."

Nothing was said about what university was granting these "90 Day Wonder" degrees and nothing about who his boss was. In addition, his work with the Navy terminated early in 1942, or not that long after the war started, so you have to wonder about the importance of that work. He suggested that it had ended, but a physicist working at the Ph.D. level would be someone to retain for a new assignment.

He claimed a conversation with Dr. Aden Meinel, who corroborated that he too had such a degree, at least according to Rhodes. But the Internet tells us that Dr. Meinel, who might have had such a "90-day wonder" degree at one point, had a doctoral degree granted by the University of California – Berkeley in 1949. And, worst still, Dr. Meinel did not confirmed the conversation.

In my correspondence with Dr. Meinel, I asked about this, specifically. Both times he did not answer the question, telling me, instead that Rhodes was a clever guy... a genius... who helped him, Meinel, with

some of his work in the mid-1950s. Valuable help, it is clear but that he, Rhodes, lost interest once he had solved the problems.

At this point I'm ready to suggest that Rhodes is no more trustworthy than those fellows who claim high military rank to improve their credibility. It seems that Rhodes had invented this tale of the mysterious degree to improve his credibility and to suggest to his neighbors he was more important than he was.

Dr. Aden. Meinel

And, like those people claiming high military rank, he had some documents to prove it but no university to back him up. He offered no names, other than Dr. Meinel, probably because he believed Dr. Meinel was dead and couldn't dispute him.

Clearly, Rhodes did not have a recognized advanced degree, and if this is enough of an embellishment for anyone to reject his photographs as faked, so be it. It seems that Rhodes was honestly reporting what he had been told by a government official during his work for the Navy. He embraced it with an enthusiasm that is similar to that of others in similar circumstances. It's not as if he invented the degree himself. But it's not as if what he was told had any real merit in the world beyond that Navy job he held during the war.

Those who knew him say that he was very smart. Meinel wrote that:

> I remember Bill as a self-made genius. He even made the first image tubes that were sensitive enough to use at a telescope. But he seemed to lose interest in any of his detector advances as soon as he was satisfied that they would work. Unfortunately, he had a knack of offending key persons at ASU [Arizona State University] and no doors opened for him. His portable 16-inch telescope was useful to me years later when I needed a network of independent amateur telescopes to monitor stellar "twinkling" as an indicator of

the blurring ground objects as would be seen from a space optical system.

This seems to suggest he might have had an "abrasive" personality. Note that it says here that he "had a knack of offending key persons at ASU and no doors opened for him." Doesn't mean he wasn't smart, that he was some sort of bad person, just that he had no "people skills."

In an email to one of his supporters, he mentioned the "Phoenix Photographs" and offered an explanation for them. The object was some kind of classified balloon-borne camera that was being used to determine how crisp and clear pictures taken from high in the atmosphere could be. It seemed like a reasonable explanation and I asked for some additional details.

Kitt Peak National Observatory

But, before I got those, I had some time to think and realized that the explanation made no sense because it had not been offered in the more than

seventy years since the pictures were taken. To make it worse, the re-sponse suggested the object had been over the city for two days. There were no additional reports of it and had that been the solution, the Air Force would have found it.

Not to mention that even if this was a classified project, as alleged, the answer would have been available to both the Air Force and the FBI and there is no indication in the files of this ever having been suggested. Remember, the Blue Book investigations (or in this case the Sign and Grudge files) were originally carried out under a classification of "secret" so there would have been no trouble learning of the explanation, if such was the case.

There might have been the problem with "Need to Know." But in this case, they had a need to know. Even if the explanation was only offered quietly, those conducting the investigations had a need to know, and such an explanation would have been obvious in the files. They might

not have mentioned the name of the project or the details of it, but they certainly could have suggested the explanation was a classified project.

I was given the acronym of the organization that would have been in charge of this research, but according to everything I could find, it wasn't created until the Eisenhower Administration. That would have made it six years too late, at best but this avenue deserves further investigation.

And there was even more trouble. According to a letter written by Rhodes and addressed to Colonel Howard McCoy, Chief of Intelligence (at ATIC at Wright-Patterson AFB), he said that he had been "trying to run down additional photographs of the unidentified object."

PANORAMIC RESEARCH
Laboratory and Observatory
Wm A. Rhodes, Chief of Staff
4337 North 14th Street Phoenix, Arizona

H. M. McCoy
Colonel, USAF
Chief of Intelligence

Dear Sir:

Since I talked with Lt Col Bean and Mr. Loedding I havebeen trying to run down additional photographs of the unidentified object.

Mr. Lewis Larmore of this city has some in his possession and I believe you can obtain copies of them by writing him. Whether or not they are real I do not know. Some of them look faked while others do not. The general shape of the ship as it was going away from me looked like this: there seemed to be a bubble on top and on bottom

while the trailing edge looked open and black like a vent. I judge by past experience that the ship was about 1500-2000 feet altitude when it started to climb and was out of sight in the base of the cumulus within 5 to 7 seconds. Allowing for a little time for acceleration this would put the object well past the speed of sound by the time it reached the cumulus (10-12000 ft). This also might account for the fact that after the ship turned its nose up the sound (which was like a P 80) faded out altogether. Judging by my past experience with aircraft recognition which I taught during the war, the ship couldn't have been under 20 or over 30 feet across.

There were no rudders visible to the unaided eye. I couldn't possibly make a trip to the base because of current debts. I couldn't stand the loss of being away from my work. After Sept 15, I could accept this invitation.

Hoping to be of further service.

Sincerely,

/s/ W. A. Rhodes

Rhodes letter with drawing of the object he saw.

Rhodes added, "Mr. Lewis Larmore of this city has some [photographs] in his possession and I believe you can obtain copies of them by writing him. Whether or not they are real I do not know. Some of them look faked while others do not. The general shape of the ship as it was going away from me looked like this: there seemed to be a bubble on top and on bottom."

There is no evidence in the files, or anywhere else of a follow up to this rather startling information. Rhodes was invited to Wright-Patterson a year or so after he took the pictures. This was for another interview, but the government, or more specifically, Howard McCoy, wrote they could provide transportation but could cover no other costs. Rhodes declined.

So, now, though I had thought this would end quickly, there are more avenues to explore. I have found two documents, one running to over 350 pages, that deal with part of this story. No, not about the UFO sighting or photographs, but to the classified experiments that were being conducted and which might, and I stress the might, explain the pictures.

As far as I know, no one has ever found the alleged Larmore pictures, the Air Force did not follow up on Rhodes' letter telling them about the pictures, they did not attempt to find and interview Larmore, and the pictures did not surface in any magazine or newspaper.

It seems to me that had an explanation been available, even if classified in 1947, it would have been noted in the file somewhere because, in 1947, many of the files were classified. Because many of the documents were originally classified the mention of a classified project as a solution wouldn't have been in violation of any of the regulations of various government organizations.

The Rhodes photographs, it seems, were ignored by the Air Force, the Air Force explanations don't work, and it is clear they engaged in subtle character assassination of Rhodes. At that moment, as the follow up investigations were made, not by the people at Project Sign (meaning Project Blue Book) but by various military officers and FBI agents, there mission was to explain the pictures. Somewhere there will be a file on this. The trick for UFO researchers is to figure out where to send the FOIA request and what to ask for in those requests.

SOURCES:

Arnold, Kenneth and Ray Palmer. *The Coming of the Saucers*. Amherst, WI:
Ray Palmer, 1952.

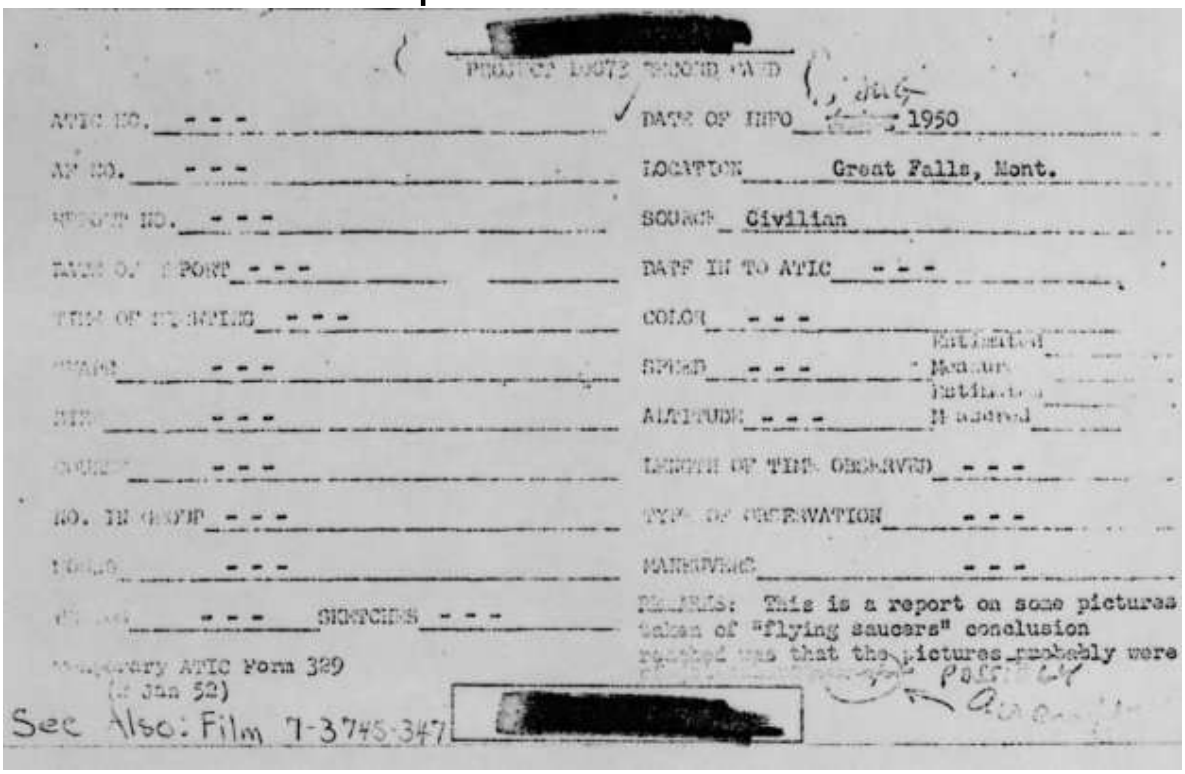
Earley, George. “The Scam That Failed: Fred Crisman and the Maury Island
Incident.” *UFO* 24,1 (October 1, 2010): 12 – 13, 65.

------. “The Scam That Failed: Fred Crisman and the Maury Island
Incident.” *UFO* 24,2 (January 2011): 12 – 13.

Hanika, Robert C. “Speedy ‘Saucer’ Zips Through Local Sky.” *Arizona Republic*
(July 9, 1947).

Project Blue Book, Roll No. 1, Case No. 46.

Chapter 4: The Montana Movie



PROJECT BOOK RECORD CARD

ATIC NO. - - -

DATE OF INFO 1950

AF NO. - - -

LOCATION Great Falls, Mont.

[redacted] NO. - - -

SOURCE Civilian

DATE OF REPORT - - -

DATE IN TO ATIC - - -

TIME OF SIGHTING - - -

COLOR - - -

NUMBER - - -

SPEED - - - Estimated Measured

DIR - - -

ALTITUDE - - - Estimated Measured

SHAPE - - -

LENGTH OF TIME OBSERVED - - -

NO. IN GROUP - - -

TYPE OF OBSERVATION - - -

WEATHER - - -

WINDS - - - SKETCHES - - -

REMARKS: This is a report on some pictures taken of "flying saucers" conclusion reached was that the pictures probably were POSS CY

Secondary ATIC Form 329 (1 Jan 52)

See Also: Film T-3745-347 [redacted]

Project Blue Book Card for the Montana Movie. Note that the case was once classified.

Nick Mariana, a 38-year-old Army Air Forces veteran, sports broadcaster, and manager of the local minor league baseball team, filmed two bright lights as they flew over Great Falls, Montana, in August 1950. It was a short, color film, that lasted some 16 seconds. The film would become one of the best and therefore one of the most controversial pieces of evidence for the existence of unidentified flying objects as something other than a terrestrial based phenomenon (Blue Book; Randle, *Scientific Ufology*,; Klass, *UFOs Explained*).

About noon, on August 15, according to what Mariana would later tell both Air Force and private UFO investigators, he was at the baseball field to check on the conditions of the stadium prior to a game. As was his habit, he glanced up at the Anaconda Copper Company smokestack to see which way the wind was blowing (Blue Book).

In an October 4, 1950, statement that Mariana gave to Air Force investigators, Captain John P. Brynildsen reported:

Mr. Mariana made these pictures between the hours of 11:25 and 11:30 a.m., at Great Falls, Montana. In the interview he stated that he first sighted the objects while standing in the grandstand on the ball park located at 26th Street and 11th Avenue North, Great Falls, Montana, and that he saw two bright disc shaped objects proceeding in a southerly direction at an altitude of approximately ten thousand feet and at a distance of about three-quarters of a mile in a westerly direction, from the observer's viewpoint. Mr. Mariana then stated that he ran downstairs and outside to his car from which he obtained his camera and made the pictures shown in the film. From the time of the first sighting to the completion of taking the pictures, Mr. Mariana estimated consumed approximately twenty seconds. At the time of his taking the pictures, a Miss Virginia Raunig… who is employed as his secretary, was a witness (Ibid.).

Nick Mariana

The film shows only two blobs of bright light that are never resolved into anything identifiable. They are low enough in the sky that there is some foreground detail visible. The lights fly over the roof of a building and pass behind a water tower before fading from sight. All of this would provide the Air Force officers, scientists, technicians and UFO researchers with something that could be taken into the lab for analysis.

One of the first problems was that Mariana didn't alert the Air Force about the sighting and the film. He did, however, tell reporters at the local newspaper what he had. Philip Klass, the UFO skeptic, found this strange. He wrote:

> It seems certain that the Mariana UFO movies are not a staged hoax, aside from the great difficulty of staging them. One typical characteristic of hoax UFO photos is that the incident is almost never reported until the pictures have been developed to see how well they turned out. In Mariana's case, he promptly reported the

incident to the local newspaper immediately afterward and at least two weeks before the films were processed (Klass, *UFOs Explained*).

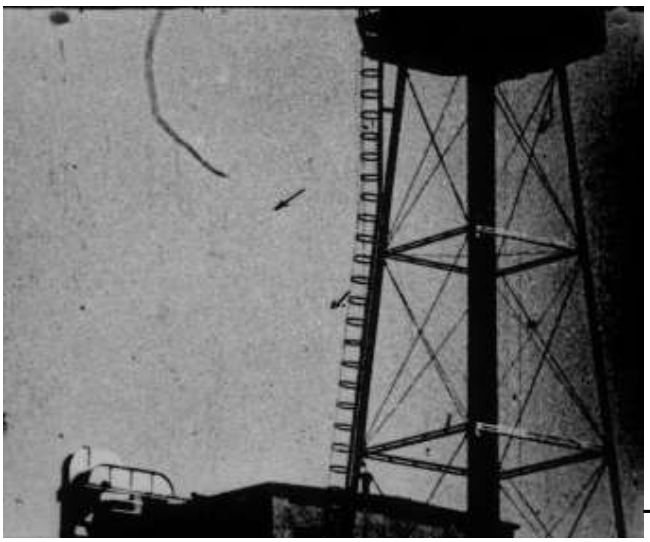
Even after the publicity about the film in the two daily newspapers, and with an Air Force base located in town, no one thought to contact the military. And, no one from the military seemed interested in contacting Mariana. Mariana showed the film to a number of local civic organizations. At one of the, finally,

Frame from the Montana Movie showing the two objects over the city.

Clifton Sullivan, of the *Great Falls Leader*, asked if he could contact the Air Force. When Mariana said he had no objection, Sullivan, rather than contacting the local Air Force base, wrote to the Air Materiel Command at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio.

At that point, the Air Force was only mildly interested in the film; that interest might have been sparked by newspaper reports rather than the sighting itself. In October, 1950, Project Grudge, as the UFO investigation was known at that time, was basically dead. The officers were doing the least possible investigation they could without catching the attention of their superiors, and few in the Air Force cared anything about flying saucers at this point. The main objective was to ignore the cases if possible and to explain them if they couldn't be ignored.

Frame from the movie showing objects behind a tower.



This attitude was obvious in a series of articles published in the *Dayton Daily News*. The first article said that the Air Materiel Command had denied a report that they had confiscated “colored motion pictures of two silver discs.” A spokesman said, “We do not have any such films here at Air Materiel Command headquarters (Blue Book).”

This was technically true. They had not confiscated the film. Although it had been sent to them voluntarily, they did have the film. The second sentence, that they did not have the film was, of course, untrue.

That article was published on a Thursday. The next day, Friday, it was announced by an intelligence officer from the Great Falls AFB that Mariana’s film, that colored motion picture, was being sent to Wright-

Patterson for

The ball field in Great Falls, Montana.

analysis. That means, of course, that what had been said on Thursday was technically correct but not necessarily the whole truth.

Four days later, on October 10, the *Dayton Daily News* reported:

> Air Materiel Command officials… after viewing the color motion pictures taken last August 15 at Great Falls, Mont., ball park said the film was too dark to distinguish any recognizable objects… The film, which during the past week had become the subject of widespread conjecture, will not be sent on to USAF Intelligence in Washington, but if he wants it, will be returned to Nick Mariana, manager of the Great Falls baseball team.

The supposed solution to the case came almost immediately. In a statement issued by the 15th District Office of Special Investigations at Great Falls to the District Commander, 5th District Office of Special Investigations at Wright-Patterson, it was noted:

> A further check of the records of Base Operations, Great Falls Air Force Base, Great Falls, Montana, indicates that an F-94 type aircraft, #2503 and an F-94 aircraft, #2502, landed Great Falls Air Force Base at 1133 and 1130 hours (Mountain Standard Time) respectively on 15 August 1950. These aircraft were assigned to the 449th Fighter Squadron, Ladd Air Force Base, Alaska. Mr. Mariana

> stated that almost immediately after taking the motion pictures, two USAF jet type aircraft had flown across the sky east of him, heading in a southerly direction (Blue Book).

In a handwritten note on the letter, some unidentified officer had written, “Probably it.” That is to say, within hours of officially beginning their investigation of the movie footage, without having seen it, without attempting any sort of analysis, the officers at Grudge had explained the film as Air Force fighters.

However, not only did they investigate the film contrary to the news releases, but the background of both Mariana and Raunig, were also researched as well. Mariana was born in 1912, was a graduate of Montana State University and a veteran of the Army Air Forces during the Second World War. He had been the editor of the base newspaper at Great Falls. He married in 1941 and by 1950 he had three daughters. He was the manager of the minor league team and had a radio show syndicated to fourteen stations. He had a good reputation in the local area and was considered to be reliable, trustworthy and an honest individual. He was not given to pranks or flights of fantasy (Ibid.).

The background of Raunig was not investigated in depth. She was nineteen at the time. She told the investigators that she thought the objects had been in sight for only seven seconds. She couldn’t contribute much to the investigation other to confirm she had seen them, and then the fighters.

The film was quickly returned to Mariana; that gave rise to one more bit of controversy. According to Mariana, the Air Force had removed the first thirty to thirty-five frames of the film or about a second or second and a half. He said that in those few frames, the shape of the objects, as well as some surface detail, was visible. The film he got back had been altered by the Air Force. That claim, which the Air Force denied, would come up in other investigations, both military and civilian (Clark, *UFO Encyclopedia*).

That wasn’t the end of the Air Force’s interest in the film. In May 1952, Colonel Frank I. Dunn wrote a letter to Mr. Bowen of the Hearst Corporation. In that letter, he wrote:

> (3) The observer [Mariana] stated the sighting took place between 1125 and 1130 hours, MST, 15 August 1950 and phenomena were in sight for a period of about eight seconds. Mr. Mariana stated that a time of approximately 20 seconds elapsed

between his first sighting of the objects and completion of his photography of them. It should be noted that this last time mentioned was obtained from a narrative report of the investigating officer, and is not a direct quotation of statement by Mr. Mariana.

(4) No reply can be made to your question concerning, relative size of objects as they appeared in film compared to film size, since the film was returned to Mr. Mariana and is not available for examination.

(5) Conclusion as to probably cause of sighting in this case is Unknown.

Possible causes considered are: Light reflections on two jet aircraft known to be in the area at the time of the sighting; exhaust of aircraft know to be in area at the time of sighting; reflections of sunlight on water tower in vicinity (Blue Book).

Within months, however, the Air Force would find that their interest in the film would increase. The UFO flap during the summer of 1952 would spark interest in many older cases. A teletype message was sent from Air Force headquarters in Washington to the Great Falls Air Force Base. It said, “Desire to know if Mr. Nick Mariana is still a resident of Great Falls and, if so, his address and telephone number and present employment. Inquiry must be discreet and preferable without his knowledge… (Ibid.)” Please note the final sentence. It is somewhat ominous.

Finally, on January 9, 1953, Major Raymond L. Kolman wrote his report on his follow-up investigation, including a longer narrative taken directly from Mariana and found in the Blue Book files. It said:

On about the 5th or 15th of August 1950, I, as manager of the Electronics, a local baseball team, walked to the grandstand of the local stadium here in Great Falls, Montana. It was approximately 1130 AM and my purpose was to check the direction of the wind in preparation for the afternoon’s game.

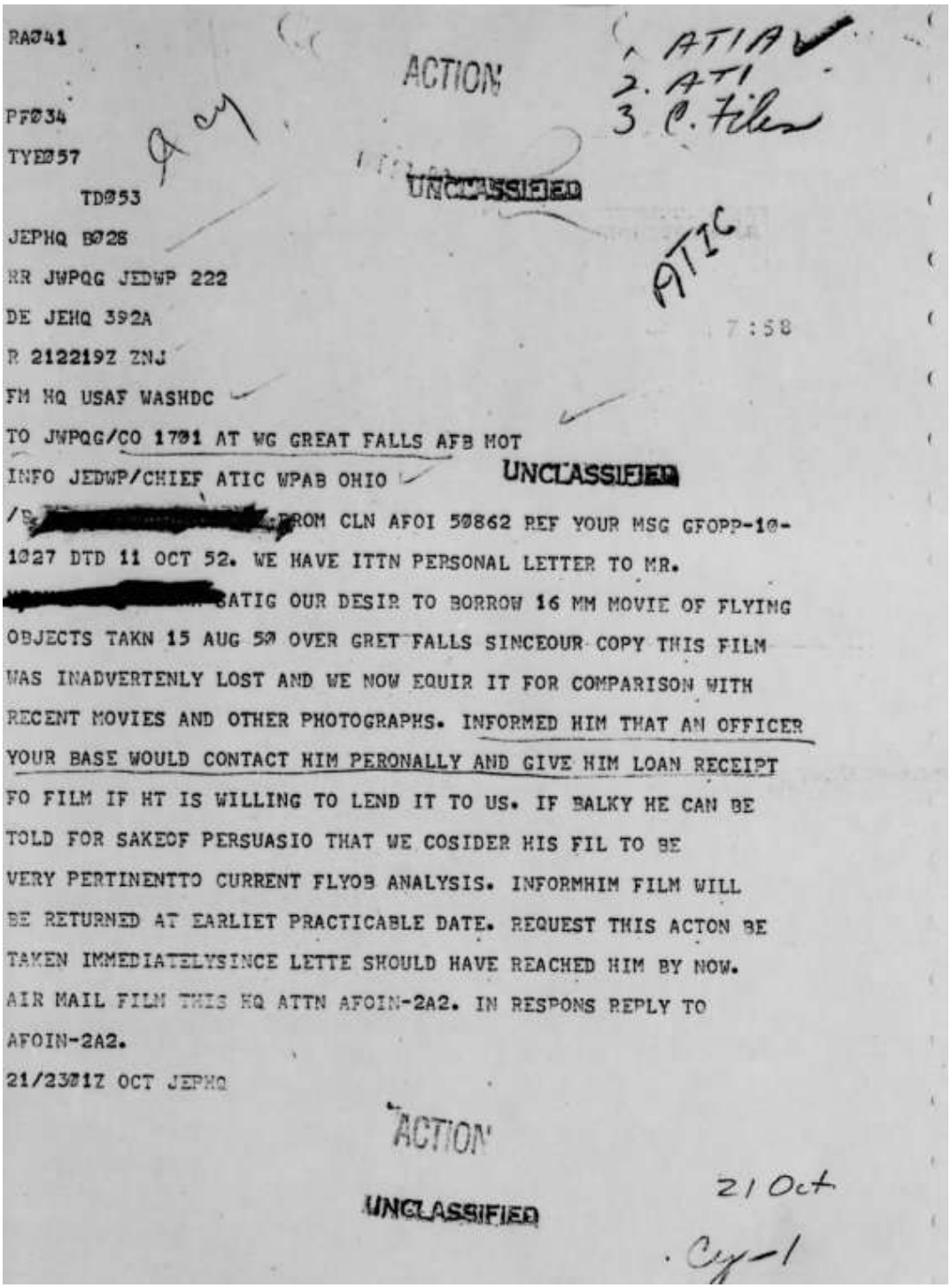
Looking toward the smoke stack to see in which direction the wind was blowing the smoke, I saw two saucer shaped, very bright objects completely motionless and in direct line with the smoke stack. I was of the opinion that they were aircraft, but after a few seconds of a still motionless view, I decided they could not be aircraft. I immediately ran to my car, which was parked adjacent to the stadium (approximately 50 Ft.) to get my movie camera. At the

same time I shouted for my secretary, and her independent description of these two objects is identical to mine. At the time I thought there might have been a whistling noise, but of that I am not certain. There was no visible exhaust or fire and the objects seemed like two new dimes glistening in the sun. I did not take time to return to the exact spot where I had originally noticed these objects. I prepared my camera and started taking pictures, from a point immediately adjacent to my car. By this time, approximately five to eight seconds that had elapsed since I had run to my car. The two objects were again motionless, but at a point to the left of the smoke stack. It was at this point that I first filmed these two objects. I repeat, they were not covering any distance; that is, they were motionless, but an occasional vibration seemed to momentarily tilt them, after which they would instantly correct their level plane to its seemingly balanced position. The two objects made an abrupt flight in an arc motion at very high speeds. I approximate the speed to have been over 400 MPH. At all times the altitude was definitely in the 5,000 to 10,000 ft. above the terrain. The end frames of the movie reel show the objects in line with a high water tower, which is approximately 130 ft. high. I approximate a 30 degree angle to have been formed by the level ground and a straight line from the objects to the spot where I was standing. At the point above the water tower, the objects hovered motionless for two or three minutes and then flew out of sight. The clearest films of the reel were removed by the Air Force when I first lent them the movies. The only ones which remain in my possession are those which show the objects at a considerable distance. I believe the objects were at all times within 2 or 2½ miles of me. Total time that the objects were in view: approximately 3½ minutes.

The sixth paragraph of Kolman's report, which is not essential to understanding the sighting from a scientific perspective said, "Shortly after the incident, Bob Considine, a nationally syndicated newspaper columnist, denounced all who claim to have seen 'flying saucers.' Particular reference was made to Mr. Mariana. This bad publicity resulted in the loss of sponsors on nine (9) of the fourteen (14) radio stations for Mr. Mariana's sports broadcasts. It was nine (9) months before these stations returned to Mr. Mariana's program and this undoubtedly resulted

in considerable financial loss to him. At present, Mr. Mariana is in the final stages of a lawsuit against Mr. Considine."

There are a couple of points that need to be made here. First, Mariana said that the film had been altered while in Air Force possession. He claimed that in the first part you could see the shape of the objects rather than just a bright blob of light. He said that he had seen the jet fighters after the objects disappeared. There was a corroborative witness and he had physical evidence of the sighting in the form of the film.



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JEPHQ B028

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DE JEHQ 392A

R 2122192 ZNJ

FM HQ USAF WASHDC

TO JWPQG/CO 1701 AT WG GREAT FALLS AFB MOT

INFO JEDWP/CHIEF ATIC WPAB OHIO

UNCLASSIFIED

/B [redacted] FROM CLN AFOI 50862 REF YOUR MSG GFOPP-10-1027 DTD 11 OCT 52. WE HAVE ITTN PERSONAL LETTER TO MR. [redacted] ATIG OUR DESIR TO BORROW 16 MM MOVIE OF FLYING OBJECTS TAKN 15 AUG 50 OVER GRET FALLS SINCEOUR COPY THIS FILM WAS INADVERTENLY LOST AND WE NOW EQUIR IT FOR COMPARISON WITH RECENT MOVIES AND OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS. INFORMED HIM THAT AN OFFICER YOUR BASE WOULD CONTACT HIM PERONALLY AND GIVE HIM LOAN RECEIPT FO FILM IF HT IS WILLING TO LEND IT TO US. IF BALKY HE CAN BE TOLD FOR SAKEOF PERSUASIO THAT WE COSIDER HIS FIL TO BE VERY PERTINENTTO CURRENT FLYOB ANALYSIS. INFORMHIM FILM WILL BE RETURNED AT EARLIET PRACTICABLE DATE. REQUEST THIS ACTON BE TAKEN IMMEDIATELYSINCE LETTE SHOULD HAVE REACHED HIM BY NOW. AIR MAIL FILM THIS HQ ATTN AFOIN-2A2. IN RESPONS REPLY TO AFOIN-2A2.

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Teletype report that refers to the Montana Movie.

Second, is the suggestion that his sighting did affect his life in a negative way. Bob Considine made comments about those who saw flying saucers. The result

was that the majority of the stations that carried his syndicated show either lost advertising or stopped carrying his sports show altogether. All this because a national commentator didn't believe that there were flying saucers suggesting that Mariana had faked the film, not a simple task in 1950.

It should be pointed out that debunkers believe there is not much of a downsize to reporting a UFO. This little episode suggests there is, and the publicity of it could persuade others who had seen something to fail to report their sightings. This was, after all, one of the goals of the Robertson Panel investigation from January 1953. Inhibit the reporting of flying saucers.

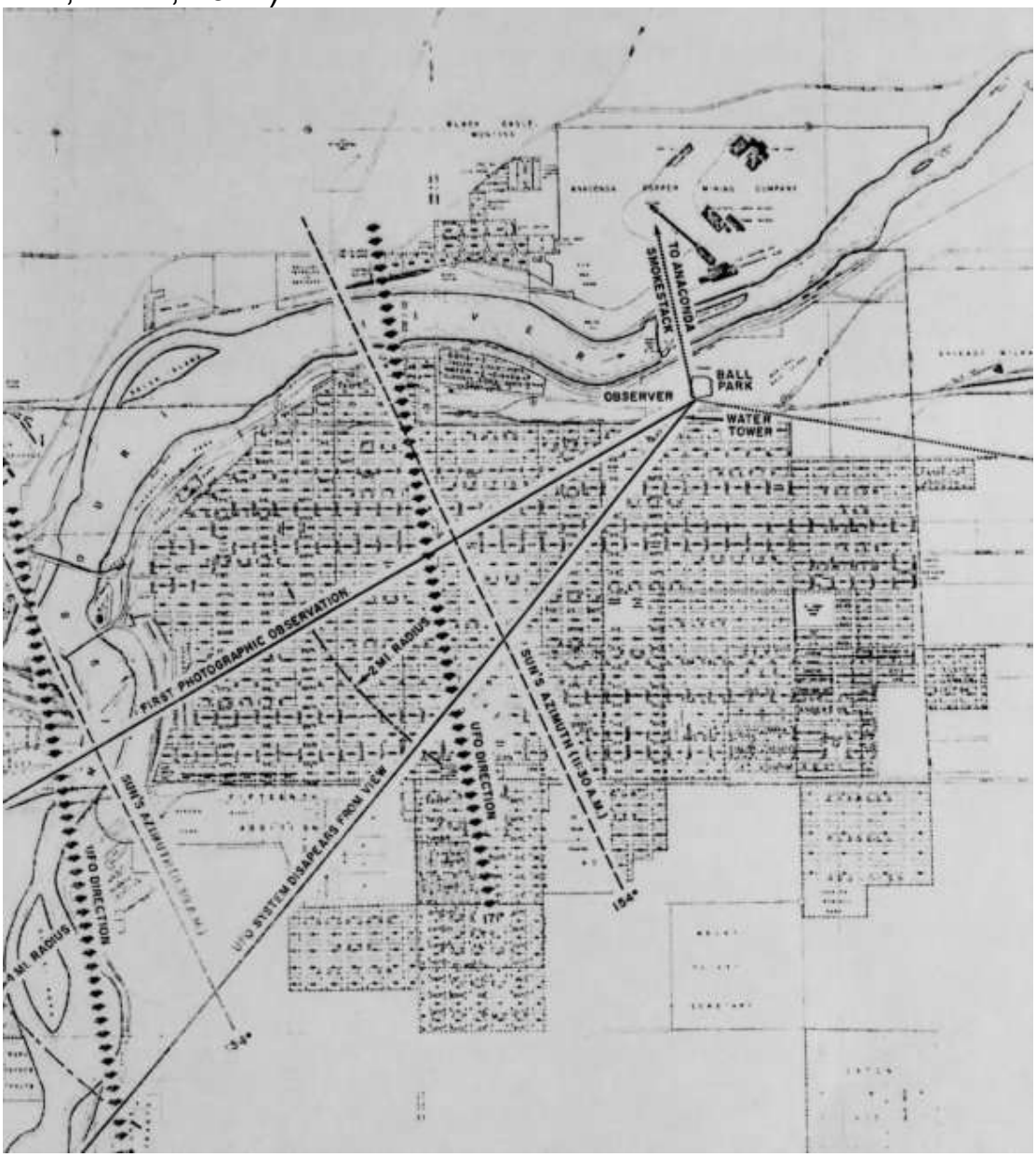
There are some other problems as well. The timing of the sighting is open to question, as are the estimates of the speed and distance to the objects. The major problem turned out to be the date. Members of the Condon Committee, the Air Force sponsored University of Colorado investigation of UFOs, reviewing the newspaper records discovered that there had been no home games between August 9 and August 18 (Gillmor, 1968). In other words, the reason that Mariana was at the stadium, to check field conditions, might be wrong. He was there just prior to an afternoon home game as has been suggested.

When looking at the case, one other thing becomes clear. The Air Force officers spent too much time looking at the background of the witnesses rather than an examination of the film footage itself. After three years of study, from those first dark days of 1947 until Mariana's sighting, one thing had become clear. Flying saucers presented no threat to national security. There hadn't been fleets of invasion craft appearing over the nation. Flying saucers weren't a technological advancement by a terrestrially based foreign power that would render most of the Air Force obsolete. Given that, the Air Force no longer cared about flying saucers from a strategic point of view.

But there was evidence in support of Mariana's sighting, not to mention a semi-independent witness. A solid scientific analysis of the sighting could provide clues about the flying saucers. Nearly everyone who studied the sighting and the film said there was nothing in Mariana's background to suggest that he would engage in a hoax, not to mention that he had neither the equipment nor expertise to create the film.

That other, semi-independent witness, Raunig, was there and saw the objects. She confirmed that there was something in the sky and that

she didn't know what they were. Though she estimated that she saw them only for seven seconds, the point is that she saw them (Blue Book files; Klass, 1974).



Map of Great Falls documenting the various positions of the witnesses and angles to sighting.

The Air Force noted that Mariana gained nothing from the sighting. In fact, they noted that there had been a financial loss caused by his report. No one even made the suggestion until Philip Klass suggested that the publicity created by the sighting might have been good for the local baseball team. Klass noted that one of Mariana's friends said that he was "very public relations conscious… that's the way Nick is. (Ibid.)."

There is no indication that Mariana attempted any public relations exploitation of the film. In fact, it is difficult to see how a flying saucer sighting would benefit a local minor league baseball team. Other than he was at the stadium, there was no public relations angle to exploit. It might be argued that people, interested in flying saucers, might drive out to the area of the stadium on the off chance that the saucers would return but they wouldn't have to enter it to look. They could sit in the parking lot for free and not have to buy a ticket to watch a game.

Philip Klass centered, with friends.

Klass raised one interesting point, however. He wrote that the sighting took place at high noon over a city of over forty thousand people. Even after the articles had been published in the newspapers, not one witness came forward to suggest that he or she had seen the objects that Mariana filmed. Klass believed that others should have seen the objects but that doesn't necessarily translate into them coming forward to report them. In other cases, such as the Socorro landing in 1964, there were other witnesses, but they never reported what they had seen.

Kolman wrote, in his January 9, 1953, review, "It is reported by hearsay that other individuals observed these objects at the same hour on the same day. However, due to the elapsed time since these sightings, no concrete leads can be found to identify other witnesses (Blue Book)."

While the argument seemed to be stalled on the two witnesses and the lack of other, independent witnesses, there was another avenue of investigation. About the time that Kolman was writing his report, the CIA sponsored an investigation of flying saucers (Clark, 2018: Swords, 210). This was an outgrowth of the major wave of sightings made during the

summer. The series of meetings, eventually known as the Robertson Panel, were held during a single week in January 1953. Although they were interested in the sightings from the previous summer, one of their goals was to view Mariana's film.

Dr. Michael Swords, who has extensively studied the history of UFOs in general and the Robertson Panel in particular, wrote, "As soon as they get finished with all the preliminary briefings, the only thing they want to do it look at the films (Swords, 2010)."

The Robertson Panel (seated) with some of the others who provided information.

After watching the film several times, the Panel settled on the aircraft explanation. To them it was all cut and dried. In any event, they saw nothing in the film to convince them that UFOs were interplanetary craft, and of course, they saw nothing to suggest a threat to national security. To be fair, without a comprehensive study of the film, their conclusions were not unwarranted. There needed to be something more to lead into the realm of the extraterrestrial.

Scientific analysis of the film didn't actually begin until the mid-1950s. Dr. Robert M. L. Baker, Jr., then with the Douglas Aircraft company, undertook a detailed study of the movie. There seems to be no disagreement with the tests or with his analysis of the film. The problem arises in his conclusions.

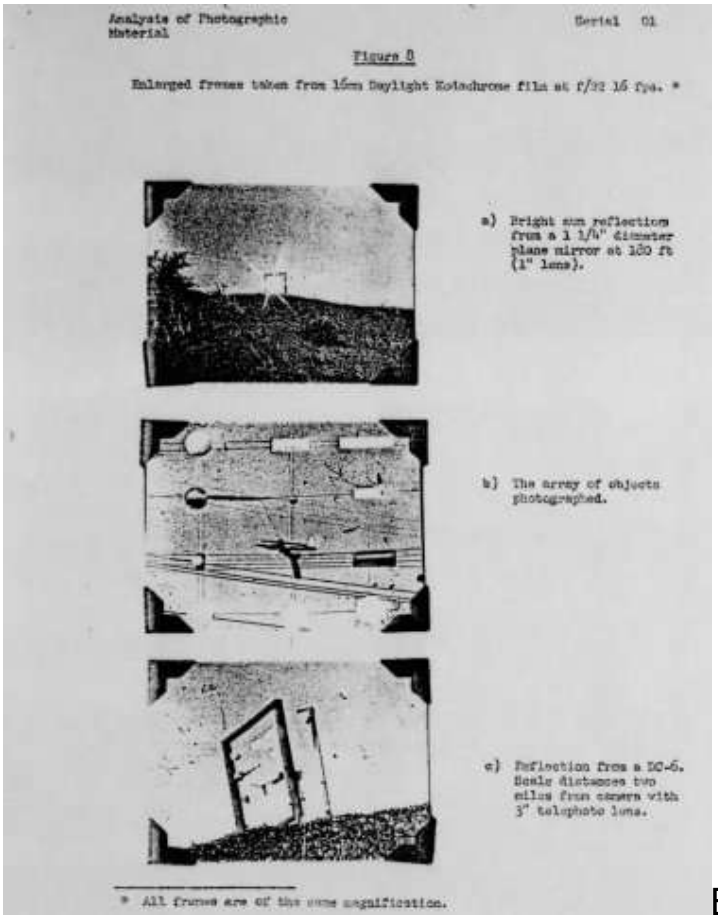
Using the data that was available by analyzing the film, Baker was able to make a number of calculations. For example, using the foreground detail on the film, as well as the speed of the lights as

evidenced by their motion, he concluded that the objects were about a quarter mile from the camera, they were at 320 feet and moving at 180 miles an hour. If they were 10 miles away, they were at 12,800 feet and traveling at 690 miles an hour. To make his calculations more precise, he needed an additional data point that he simply didn't have. Had there been another witness in another part of the city, then he would have been able to refine the numbers, and that might have made it easier to identify the objects. Or it might have proven that Mariana had filmed something extremely unusual (Baker, 1972; 1968; 1956).

Baker did run a series of tests using both actual aircraft and scale models. Using a camera similar to Mariana's, he filmed aircraft at varying distances. At 12 miles, a DC-3 seemed to duplicate a portion of the Montana Movie. Baker, however, was less than thrilled with the test results.

After studying the film carefully, Baker determined that the objects were two miles from the camera. At that range, the F-94s would be identifiable as aircraft. As the range increased, so did the speed of the aircraft. At 12 miles – range at which the DC-3 duplicated the reflections from the fuselage - the speed was about three times of that of a DC-3. The significant fact was that the plane was only masked by the reflections for a few seconds, meaning that Mariana should have been able to identify them at some point during the sighting.

Part of Baker's report on his analysis of the movie.



Analysis of Photographic Material — Serial 01

Figure 8

Enlarged frames taken from 16mm Daylight Kodachrome film at f/32 16 fps. *

a) Bright sun reflection from a 1 1/4" diameter plane mirror at 120 ft (1" lens).

b) The array of objects photographed.

c) Reflection from a DC-6. Scale distances two miles from camera with 3" telephoto lens.

* All frames are of the same magnification.

Based on his examination, Baker concluded that the shape of the objects was due to irregular “panning” by Mariana (Ibid.). About a decade later, William K. Hartmann of the Condon Committee agreed. He also noted that there was a true and constant ellipticity, or flattening of the objects. Hartmann thought that the shape might not be completely due to Mariana’s panning.

In Hartmann’s analysis, he wrote, “If the 15 August date were correct, the objects were not balloons or airborne debris because they were moving into the wind. They are disappearing to the SW, and Baker’s analysis indicates a well determined azimuth heading 171 degrees, while the wind was out of the southwest (Gillmor, 1969).”

Hartmann ruled out birds because of the disc shape and the “general strangeness to both witnesses…” He also eliminated meteors because the objects were moving too slowly, left no trail and were not reported anywhere else.

Hartmann added comment that was somewhat surprising, given the general direction of the Condon Committee. In his final report on the

sighting, he wrote, “Past investigations have left airplanes as the principal working hypothesis. The data at hand indicate that while it strains credibility to suppose that these were airplanes, the possibility nonetheless cannot be entirely ruled out (Ibid.).”

Hartmann also wrote, “Assuming that 15 August was the correct date, Air Force investigators found that there were two F-94 jets in the vicinity and that they landed only minutes after the sighting, which could well have put them in circling path around Malmstrom AFB [Great Falls AFB before name changed], only three miles ESE of the baseball park. However, Witness I [Mariana] reported seeing two planes coming in for a landing behind him immediately following the filming, thereby accounting for those aircraft (Ibid.).”

Malmstrom Air Force Base circa 1950.

We have, then, physical evidence available on the film that proves something was in the sky over Great Falls. Unfortunately, the quality of the evidence doesn’t allow us to prove the objects were of terrestrial manufacture or of extraterrestrial origin. We are left with only with what look like blobs of brightness on the film.

Other available evidence and information might provide additional clues. The exact timing of the event begins to play an important role. Mariana estimated that the objects were visible for twenty seconds. In Brynildsen’s October 6 report, he wrote, “From the time of the first sightings to the completion of taking the pictures, Mr. Mariana estimated consumed approximately twenty seconds (Blue Book).”

If that is true, then the aircraft explanation becomes more plausible. Baker’s tests, as well as those run by others, suggested that bright reflections from the aircraft fuselage could mask the wings and tail for

twenty seconds and therefore could have fooled both Mariana and Raunig.

We can, however, make some accurate statements about the timing. The film itself lasts for sixteen seconds. We know from Mariana's statements that he had to run to his car for the camera, pick it up, and then begin filming. Baker reported, "Mr. Mariana estimated that it took him thirty seconds or more after first observing the UFOs to run to his car, set the camera and start filming. His secretary, also at the scene, testifies that the objects remained in view the whole period between the first sighting and the filming."

The test conducted by Baker showed that the reflections from the fuselage of the fighters would fade considerably as the aircraft moved through the air. After just a few seconds, the brightness would fade and the details of the jets would become visible. Baker's tests suggested that the aircraft solution was inadequate to explain the sighting.

At this point, with the examination of the available data, the statements provided by both Mariana and Raunig, and the experiments and scientific evaluations conducted by others under various conditions after over forty years, certain conclusions can be drawn.

First, given the data, a number of the explanations have been eliminated based on the eyewitness testimony and evidence on the film. The lights are not balloons, birds, meteors, airborne debris or meteorological phenomena. Everyone who examined the films have reached those conclusions, many independently of the others.

Second, there is nothing in the background of either witnesses to suggest hoax, mental illness, delusion, or an inability to identify common objects. Neither gained financially because of the case and in fact, Mariana suffered some financial reversals.

Third, the aircraft explanation fails in the light of two important facts. One, the length of time the objects are in view suggests that the fuselage reflections that might have obscured the shape would have decreased to the point where the aircraft would have been visible and easily identified as such. And, of course, both witnesses said that they saw the aircraft in a different part of the sky.

As an addendum, it should be noted that Mariana saw the objects hovering for a short period of time. That would eliminate the fighters simply because they don't hover. It is interesting to note that in all that

has been written about the case there are references to hovering craft except in the official Project Blue Book files.

Mariana also said that he heard a “whooshing or whistling” sound that accompanied the objects’ flight. If that is an accurate statement, then it could also be postulated that had the objects been jets, the engine noise would have been heard. In one of the Air Force statements, it was claimed that not only were the jets in the air but they were also using afterburners, which would have increased their speed and their engine noise. The fact that neither Mariana nor Raunig heard the jet engines is an important point.

Baker also said that he examined the film for evidence of the exhaust from the jets but found nothing. Given the technology available, it would be interesting to reexamine the film to see if there is any disturbance behind the objects. If it could be found it might be possible to determine the identity of the objects if they are of terrestrial manufacture.

Fourth, there the dispute about the date, which has been ignored in some of the analyses. There were no home games scheduled for the baseball team on one of the two dates offered for the sighting. Mariana was quite clear in his original statement. He was at the ball park to check the field conditions before an afternoon game. The records show no home game on August 15. If August 15 is not the correct date, but August 5 is, then new problems arise as old ones are eliminated.

Klass suggested no hoax because those perpetrating hoaxes normally wait for the film to be developed before announcing they have pictures. According to newspaper articles, Mariana told the newspaper about the sighting almost as it happened.

But what if the August 5 date is correct? Then there were ten days in which to get the film processed, see if there was an image, if the image was identifiable as something terrestrial, before he announced it. This would mean that before Mariana said a word about the film, he had seen it and knew what was on it. There is no indication in the files of anyone attempting to verify the dates the film was processed. That, in and of itself, might have provided a few important

Fighter wrapped in condensation obscuring the aircraft

clues about the nature of the sighting. At today's late date, there is no way to determine the processing dates.

Klass does offer an alternative explanation for the Montana Movie. He explained that after he began his investigation, he saw a photograph in the January 1969 issue of *Air Progress* magazine that suggested another and newer explanation to him. The picture showed an F-4K fighter making a low-altitude pass at Farnborough Air Show. It was enveloped in a glowing blob of white that was about 40 feet in diameter. It looked enough like the bright lights on Mariana's film that Klass believed that he had found the ultimate explanation. Klass wrote:

> This prompted me to wonder if this, or some other unusual atmospheric effect, could have produced a similar at Great Falls – a phenomenon that would be unfamiliar to Mariana and could have obscured the identity of the two F-94s. The official Weather Bureau records for Great Falls for August 15 showed that at 11:27 a.m. the surface temperature was 77 [degrees]F and the dew point was 45 [degrees]F. (Dew point temperature is the temperature at which the air would have 100 percent humidity.) Thus, August 15 was not an especially humid day in Great Falls. More recently, a similar "localized fog" effect was observed around the fuselage of a USAF B-52 during Boeing flight tests and was photographed by the crew of a nearby 'chase plane.' The B-52 had been flying at 21,000 feet altitude around 600 mph. Boeing scientists, after investigating the effect, concluded that the temperature of the air was lowered by flowing over the wings, which therefore increased its relative humidity. Under the prevailing atmospheric conditions, this caused water droplets to form in the wake of the airplane, creating a localized fog which reflected the rays of the sun. Just such a condition could explain the Great Falls 'white blobs' and why they

> remained visible for a time considerably longer than the allowable twenty seconds calculated by Baker for simple reflections off the F-94 fuselages (Klass, 1974).

There is a problem with this idea. The two fighters were at a much lower altitude and a much slower speed. That overlooks the fact that the white blobs noted by Klass are created by the speed of the air over the wings. In other words, the nose and the tail of the aircraft would have been visible at some point during the flight. Either Mariana would have recognized the aircraft as such or the film would have revealed, at some point, the shape of the aircraft. Besides, it must be remembered that Mariana said that he and Raunig did see the jets in another part of the sky. The Klass' suggested phenomenon is interesting, but it has no real relevance to this discussion.

Baker ruled out these sorts of phenomena as well. In *UFO's" A Scientific Debate*, in the section on motion pictures, he wrote, "After more than a decade of speculation and hypothesis checks, all natural phenomena (birds, balloons, insects, meteors, mirages, and so forth) have been ruled out. (Since the date of the photograph is uncertain, weather bureau reports are not pertinent, but the uniform motion does not seem to be consistent with balloons.) The main possibility is that of airplane reflections or, perhaps some airplane-related phenomenon such as luminous shock waves. The airplane hypothesis may seem attractive, but it does not really jibe with my analysis of with Hartmann's. In short, planes at the largest distances compatible with their speeds and the angular rate of the images would have been identifiable on the film."

Air Force officers, in a number of statements and reports that appear in the Project Blue Book files, wrote:

> The original Air Force conclusion, based on interrogation of witnesses and the evaluation of data, was that the UFOs were, in all probability, two Air Force F-94 fighter aircraft known to be in the vicinity at the time… Based on the degree of credibility accorded this early ATIC evaluation and the strong corroborative evidence supplied by the recent independent analysis, the Air Force has no compelling reason to alter its original conclusion.

While it is easy to disagree with the Air Force that the Mariana film is explained by the aircraft, it should be noted that their explanation is not without foundation, given a complete understanding of what is in the file. They were, of course, swayed by the bias against having any sighting

remain as unidentified, as well as a documented policy of providing any explanation for a sighting report.

But Hartmann, working with the Condon Committee in the late 1960s, seemed to refute the Air Force attitude. Hartmann wrote:

> There are several independent arguments against the airplane reflections. (1) Short-term variations in image size (corrected with brightness), time scale ca. 1 sec., are typically not more than [plus or minus) 5%. A priori considerations of aircraft stability and empirical observations by Baker indicate that it is very likely that two aircraft could maintain such constant reflections over not only the 16 sec. and 20-degree azimuth arc photographed but also the minimum of 50 sec. visually observed. I have confirmed this by studying of Tucson airports; in at least a dozen cases none has been seen to maintain a constant or unidentifiable reflection as long as 16 sec (Gillmor, 1969).

That isn't the most surprising of Hartmann's conclusions. He wrote, "The case remains unexplained… [The] images on the film are difficult to reconcile with aircraft or other known phenomena, although aircraft cannot be entirely ruled out."

There is one other aspect that hasn't been addressed as completely as it should be. Mariana said that the Air Force altered his film, removing several feet from the beginning that showed the objects as disk shaped. The Air Force does confirm that their technicians removed one frame because the sprockets had been damaged. It means that the film was altered while held by the Air Force, but it does not prove that as much as 16 feet had been taken out as suggested by Mariana.

Barry Greenwood

UFO researcher Barry Greenwood, in September 2000 published an article, "On the Question of Tampering with the 1950 Great Falls UFO Film," published in the *UFO Historical Revue*. He wrote:

First was John Wuertner, Mariana's attorney… When interviewed about the film… Wuertner said that the Air Force kept the film for a long period [and]… "I know doggone well that that tape when it was returned, was little or nothing to it." Wuertner said that he recalled better views of the film in the original cut. "…when I saw it compared to what came back, it wasn't complete. The main part that I recall that didn't come back was when it was right overhead. Now it started in the east and as it arose on the horizon then there was a part cut out and all we have lest was the part disappearing over the west." He added that there was the appearance of spinning… [He] continued, "If I had to make an estimate of what I thought had been cut off, I would say that it was, oh gosh, maybe one-fourth to one-fifth – it would be hard to say.

Another testament came from E. P. Furlong, managing editor of the *Great Falls Tribune*. He saw the film originally, then later on TV, feeling that the TV version was considerably shorter…

Tony Dalick ran a sporting goods store where the film had been run before being sent to the Air Force. He testified there was "a lot missing, perhaps 2 – 3 feet." He remembered two objects, definitely spinning, shaped like a wafer of peppermint candy.

Craig [of the Condon Committee] interviewed Nicholas Mariana seventeen years after the event. He clarified some aspects of the sighting detail.

On the alleged spinning motion: "You could see the spinning action of the center portion in the middle of the film."…

On the diagonal cut at the beginning of the film, "The reason I know it was cut, too, was that they came back with the original and they had spliced it diagonally. Well, I never used the diagonal splice. I used horizonal splice."

To be fair, it must be remembered that the Air Force did admit to splicing the film. As noted, the film bears this out, but the claim is that they removed a single frame. Greenwood continued:

Let's look at the film strip itself… The length of the actual Great Falls footage is 6 feet, ¾ inch, with 42-inch blank lead and a 52-inch blank end. The total length of the filmstrip is about 14 feet. There is no telling when the blanks were added on but there were not part of the original film and they were certainly added by the Air Force.

> According to Captain Byrnildsen's transmittal letter of October 6, 1950, approximately 15 feet of film was sent to Wright-Patterson AFB. But in a clipped cited in Jerome Clark's The UFO Encyclopedia…from the Great Falls Tribune… Byrnildsen is said told the reporter that he picked up 8 feet of film Mariana. Unless someone made errors in quoting the footage, it seems like Byrnildsen picked up eight feet of film from Mariana, added on the blank footage and sent the finished product to Wright-Patterson…
>
> The supposedly complete copy of the edited Air Force print, that which Mariana received after having his film "reduced" is nearly two feet shorter than the lowest estimate of what the Air Force said they had received at Wright-Patterson in 1950! Since on a viewing of the existing print there are no major jump cuts in the sequence, which flows rather smoothly, and since the film ends about where the witness has testified (the objects moving into the distance and disappearing), one must conclude that about two feet of film is missing from the beginning of the sequence.
>
> This is exactly what Mariana claims. It is also in good agreement with the testimony of Tony Dalick, the sporting goods store owner who had seen the footage before and after the claimed editing by the Air Force, saying that he felt "two or three" feet were missing from the beginning…

This then, suggests some duplicity on the part of Air Force investigators. They removed the best part of the film and returned the rest. They said they had removed a single frame, but the evidence seems to suggest otherwise. Given the condition of the film, it can be established that the missing footage is from the beginning, where the objects were seen as that… objects.

The Montana movie as it exists today does not lead us to the extraterrestrial arena. If the objects on the film are not aircraft, then their performance, if they are manufactured objects, was outside the range of our capabilities at the time. If the removed frames of the film showed them as slowly spinning disks, that eliminates all terrestrial explanations. That does, of course, suggest an extraterrestrial point of origin, but doesn't prove it completely.

In today's environment, this conclusion isn't as important as another, which can be sustained in a scientific arena. The Montana movie is physical evidence of an event that has no mundane explanation. From

an objective standpoint, all that can be said is that the movie shows something that is not identifiable as either natural phenomenon or jet aircraft. If nothing else, the film should appeal to those with an open and objective point of view as physical evidence of something outside the bounds of conventional explanation. Given that, science should be curious about the film.

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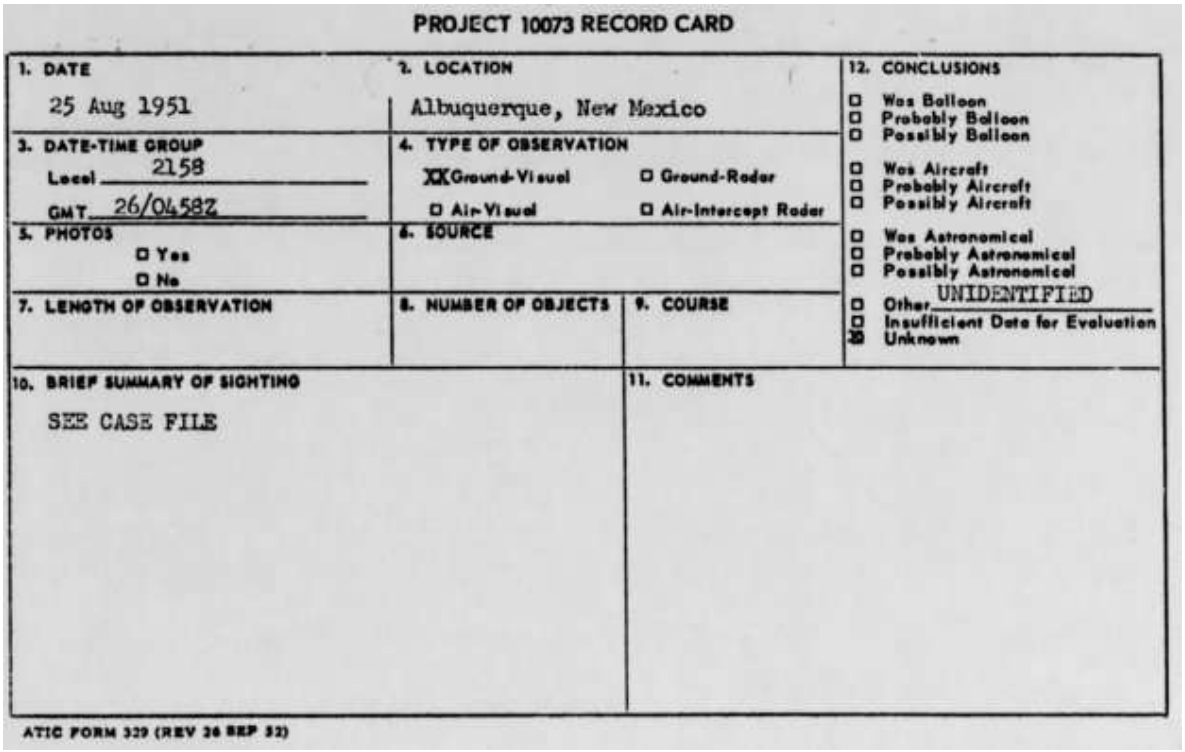
Chapter 5: The Lubbock Lights, September 1951



PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD

1. DATE: 25 Aug 1951	2. LOCATION: Albuquerque, New Mexico	12. CONCLUSIONS: ☐ Was Balloon ☐ Probably Balloon ☐ Possibly Balloon ☐ Was Aircraft ☐ Probably Aircraft ☐ Possibly Aircraft ☐ Was Astronomical ☐ Probably Astronomical ☐ Possibly Astronomical ☐ Other UNIDENTIFIED ☐ Insufficient Data for Evaluation ☒ Unknown
3. DATE-TIME GROUP: Local 2158; GMT 26/0458Z	4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION: XX Ground-Visual ☐ Ground-Radar ☐ Air-Visual ☐ Air-Intercept Radar	
5. PHOTOS: ☐ Yes ☐ No	6. SOURCE	
7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION	8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS / 9. COURSE	
10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING: SEE CASE FILE	11. COMMENTS	

ATIC FORM 329 (REV 26 SEP 52)

Although not in Lubbock, this sighting seems to be the first of those sightings.

Although the case became identified with Lubbock, Texas, the first of the sightings actually was made in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in the early evening of August 25, 1951. A man and his wife (unidentified in the Project Blue Book files but who are Hugh and Emily Young) watched a huge, "wing-shaped" UFO with blue lights on the trailing edge as it passed over the outskirts of the city. In his statement, found in the Blue Book files, Young said:

> This aircraft was flying in a south by east direction at a speed I thought to be about 300 miles per hour.
>
> The altitude was difficult to judge, but the aircraft was low enough so that the lights from Central Ave. reflected from the lower side of the wings.
>
> This aircraft was unusual in the following ways, there was no sound of motors or jets in fact there was no sound at all that I could hear. I could see no fuselage on this aircraft. The size I judged to be

at least one and one half times as large as a B-36 and was shaped like a V with the wings sloping back at an angle of about 15 degrees.

On the rear edge of the wings soft white lights were located in pairs with not less than six of these on each side of center. These lights were very different from motor or jet exhausts as seen at night. I am familiar with the appearance of these.

From the front edge of the wing stripe extended to the rear edge of the wings with the strip ending between the lights of each pair. These strips had poor reflection.

Each pair of lights were separated by about eight times the distance between the lights of one pair.

The wings appeared to retain their size from the center to the end without any taper.

No identification or markings could be seen and this aircraft had no colored lights of any kind that could be seen. The aircraft was in my sight about ½ minute.

This is a true description of the aircraft as I observed and remember it. (Blue Book).

This was signed by Young and it was certified as a true copy by John T. Hagood, an Air Force captain. It is clear that the Air Force was taking the sighting seriously because Young was a security guard at the Sandia Labs, which was part of the Atomic Energy Commission and that provided a level of credibility to his report. In fact, it was noted in one of the reports that Young was “apparently reliable.”

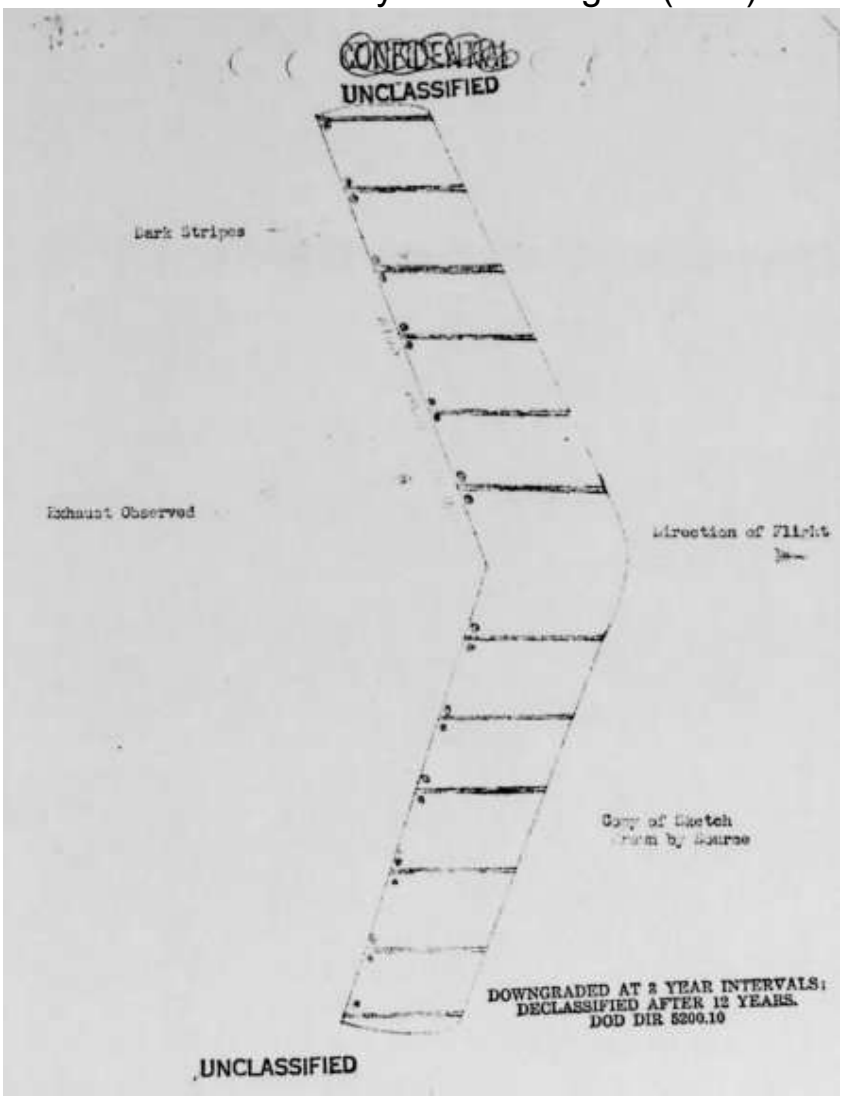
There were additional details of the investigation included in the Blue Book files, along with a statement by Emily Young, whose name was redacted throughout the file. Her statement provided the same description as that of her husband. There is no reason to believe that they did not discuss the sighting with each other before the Air Force investigator arrived to take their statements.

In a confidential report submitted to the Inspector General at the 17th District Office of Special Investigation, Colonel S. H. Kirkland, Jr. (who was stationed at Kirtland AFB) made a couple of important points. He wrote:

Reference is made to your Spot Intelligence Report of 27 August 1951, subject as given above [unconventional type of aircraft]. It is not known whether or not you are familiar with a report from OSI District Office No. 23, Carswell Air Force Base, Fort Worth, Texas, in

which a similar sighting over Lubbock, Texas, on 25 August 1951 is reported…

Also enclosed are four photographs taken by Mr. [name redacted, but is Carl Hart, Jr.] on 30 August 1951 which are supposedly similar to those seen over Lubbock, Texas, on 25 August 1951. It is requested that these photographs by shown to Mr. [name redacted but is Hugh Young] and obtain his opinion as to whether or not this is what he saw over Albuquerque on the night of 25 August 1951. If he does concur that this is what he saw, have him sketch in the wing he reported seeing and obtain any other details that he may be able to give (Ibid.).



Young's Illustration of the object that he and his wife saw.

According to a letter found in the Blue Book files and dated 14 November 1951, the photographs were shown to the Youngs. They said that the formation of lights was similar to the wing that they had seen. At that point Young made the sketch that had been requested. Apparently, he drew the wing on one of Hart's photographs and then provided a separate sketch as well.

There are several additional documents that provide for the weather conditions in Albuquerque at the time. There was a check of the various airport control towers, both military and civilian, but there were no airplanes in the area at that time that looked like what the Youngs saw. And, unfortunately, a check with the police, sheriff and the FBI failed to turn up any additional witnesses. Had it not been for the sightings over Lubbock within a couple of hours, the case would have had little real significance and would have been noted as just another "Unidentified."

Not long after the Albuquerque sighting, several college professors, while sitting on a porch in Lubbock, Texas, saw a formation of lights sweep overhead. The lights were in sight for only three or four seconds according to them and none of the men managed to get a very clear look at them. Air Force investigators would later say that sightings of a short duration are virtually useless because everything happens too fast. The human eye and brain do not have time to properly record the event.

The professors, W.L. Ducker, A.G. Oberg, and W.I. Robinson, were annoyed that they hadn't seen more. They discussed what to do if the lights should reappear. Before the night was over, they had their chance and made a series of quick and well-coordinated observations.

The lights were softly glowing, bluish objects in a loose formation. The first group, they believed, had been in a more rigid and more structured formation than later groups but they hadn't gotten a good look at them.

Offices of the Lubbock *Avalanche*.

Jay Harris, the managing editor of the *Lubbock Avalanche*, first learned of the lights when Ducker called the news desk to tell of the sighting. Harris wasn't interested at first because it was basically about lights in the night sky, but Ducker convinced him that it was important. Ducker wanted a story written so that others who might have seen the lights could be found and comparisons with their information could be made. Harris finally agreed, but only if the newspaper could print Ducker's name because his position at Texas Tech gave him instant credibility. Ducker didn't like that condition and momentarily refused.

But a few minutes later, Ducker called back and said that the newspaper could use his name, and the names of Oberg and Robinson. The only condition was that Harris would have to get permission of the college (Texas Tech) public relations department before printing an of their names.

There were at least four others who saw the lights on that first night. Mrs. Earl Mediock, Mrs. F.A. Rogers, Mrs. R.A. Rogers (in the convention of the time, women were often identified by their husbands' last name and their first names were not printed), and Professor Carl Henninger all reported seeing the lights at 9:10 P.M. That was the first flight described by the professors.

Joe Bryant of Brownfield, Texas, said that he also saw the lights on that night of August 25. According to him, he was sitting in his backyard when a group of the lights flew overhead. He said there was "kind of a glow, a little bigger than a star." A short time later, a second group of

lights appeared. Neither group was in any kind of regular formation which differs from what the professors and those others had seen.

Bryant eventually saw a third flight that same night, but instead of flying over his house, this time the lights dropped down and circled the building. Now he could see the objects quite clearly and they were birds. One of them chirped and Bryant recognized them as "plover." The next day, as he read the account of the lights in the newspaper, he realized that if he hadn't identified the lights as birds, he would have been as fooled as the professors.

Over the next two weeks, the professors saw the lights on several occasions, but were unable to obtain any useful data. Joined by Grayson Meade, E.R. Hienaman and J.P Brand, they equipped two teams with two-way radios, measured a base line from the location of the original sightings, and sent the teams out to opposite ends of that base to watch. They hoped that sightings along the base line would provide them with enough information to allow triangulation which would allow them to determine the size, altitude, and speed of the lights.

The Texas Tech Campus.

They did manage to make a few observations over the next several weeks. The lights traveled through about 90 degrees of sky in a matter of seconds. They normally appeared 45 degrees above the horizon and disappeared about 45 degrees above the opposite horizon. During the first observation, the lights had been in a roughly semicircular formation. In subsequent sightings no regular pattern was noticed.

None of the deployed teams ever made a sighting, through on one or two occasions, the wives of the men, who had remained behind, said they had seen the lights while the men were at the bases. That would

suggest that the lights were much lower than the professors had originally thought which would also reduce the estimated size and speed.

On August 31, the case took a radical turn. A nineteen-year-old amateur photographer, Carl Hart, Jr., managed to take five pictures of the lights as they flew over his house. Because it was hot that night, he had pushed his bed close to the window and was looking out and up. He said, "I liked to sleep with the windows open with my head stuck out the window - and there they were." Knowing that the lights had returned on several occasions based on the articles in the newspaper, he grabbed his 35-mm camera, set the shutter at f-3.5 and went outside.

A few minutes later the lights flew over a second time and Hart took two photographs of them. Not long after that, another group of lights appeared, and Hart apparently took three additional pictures. Some controversy about the number of photographs developed in the weeks following the sighting.

One of the pictures taken by Carl Hart, Jr.

Harris, who had spoken to Ducker on the first night, learned of the pictures when a photographer who worked for the newspaper periodically, called to tell him that Hart had just been to his studio to develop the film. Harris, reluctant as ever, suggested that Hart should bring the pictures by the newspaper office. It was the first tangible

evidence that there was something to the stories. It was the first physical evidence of something in the sky. Harris, and the newspaper's head photographer William Hams, feared a hoax. Harris, after seeing the photos called Hart a number of times and bluntly asked him if he had faked them. Hart replied that he hadn't faked anything. He had photographed something as it flew over his house in south Lubbock. Hart just didn't care what Harris thought.

Two more of the pictures taken by Carl Hart, Jr.

He didn't care about payment for the pictures either, though he eventually received about ten dollars for them from the newspaper. Later the pictures were printed in dozens of magazines and books, but Hart rarely received any payment for their use, though he was sometimes credited with having taken the pictures. He had failed to have any of the pictures copyrighted, on the advice of another photographer who said that the copyright would suggest hoax. That poor advice would surface in a number of other photographic cases.

"Advice from a friend and professional journalist at the time was that if [I] copyright them, somebody's going to think [I] faked them and [was] trying to make money out of them," Hart told me. "I was interested in that part of it [proving the pictures authentic] and didn't do it [copyright them.]"

Carl Hart, Jr. during Air Force investigation.

Harris later decided to put the photos on the news wire, but before he did, he called Hart one more time. This time Harris warned Hart that if he found out the pictures were faked, there would be grave consequences and that Hart would never work as a professional photographer. Once the photographs went out on the wire, nationwide, Harris said, Hart's problems would be far worse if he was lying about them. Hart still insisted his pictures were authentic. There was no fraud.

Hams, however, decided that he was going to try to duplicate Hart's pictures. By doing that, Hams believed he might be able to figure out exactly what they showed, or, at the very least, how Hart had managed to take them. It might also suggest how he, Hart, faked them. Hams took a Speed Graphic camera loaded with a tungsten ASA 80 film and a GE#22 flash bulb in a concentrating reflector to the roof of the *Avalanche* building. It was the same equipment that he used to photograph night football games at the local high schools and college. Of course, a flash wouldn’t be effective if the objects were several hundred feet above him.

He waited, but saw nothing other than a flight of migratory birds. They were barely visible in the glow of the sodium vapor lights on the street five or six floors below him. They flew in a ragged V-formation, and he could see them dimly outlined against the deeper black of the night sky. He was surprised because they were so quiet. Ducks and geese, as they flew, could be heard squawking.

When Hams developed the film, he found an image that was so weak that he couldn't print it. He repeated the experiment on another occasion

and failed again. From his own experience, he was convinced that Hart could not have photographed birds under any circumstances. That didn't mean that he hadn't faked them, only that they didn't show birds.

The photographs became one of the most important aspects of the Lubbock case. Here was physical evidence that could be seen and tested. Measurements and studies of the photos could be made, and professionals could attempt to duplicate them. Hams, and the photography staff at the newspaper, could find no evidence of a hoax. They believed that if Hart faked the pictures, he was wasting his time in college. Clearly, he was the best photographer in the area. He would have a career in Hollywood special effects if he wanted... if he had faked them.

Hart continued to insist that he had not faked anything. In fact, he told me, "I heard some unofficial things that came out later... about [how] they thought I had faked them somehow or another." This is based on an experiment conducted by Dr. Donald Menzel, a Harvard astronomer and UFO debunker. He suggested lights reflecting off an inversion layer, one of his favorite explanations.

In September, 1951, the Air Force began the official investigation of the Lubbock Lights episode. The Albuquerque sighting was checked by intelligence officers from Kirtland AFB. They made several visits to the house of the witnesses and asked hundreds of questions during the interrogation. Emily Young provided a drawing of the object which was then forwarded to Wright-Patterson AFB. After several weeks, and partly because of the reliability of the witness, the sighting was listed as an unidentified. That is the way it was carried until the end of the official Air Force investigation in 1969.

In Lubbock, quite a bit of time was spent on the photographs taken by Hart, simply because they were evidence of the sighting. Although the official file contains the results of other aspects of the investigation, the majority of the paperwork covers the photographs. Officers, including Lt. John Farley and Special Agent Howard N. Bossert of the Air Force Office of Special Investigation, both from Reese AFB, just outside of Lubbock, were dispatched a number of times with questions for Hart. Lieutenant (later Captain) Ed Ruppelt even made a special trip into Lubbock to conduct his own investigation into the lights and to interview Hart himself. The negatives were examined by a variety of military and civilian experts at photo labs at Wright-Patterson.

On September 20, 1951, Bossert and Farley interviewed Hart at his home and asked for the negatives. Hart could only find four of the five. The fifth negative was never found and it was not printed in any newspaper. Hart turned the negatives over the military for their analysis. Bossert's initial report, dated October 8, 1951, was sent to AFOSI Headquarters in Washington, D.C. Copies were also sent to the commanding general of the Air Materiel Command at Wright-Patterson AFB, and to the commanding officer at Reese AFB in Lubbock (Blue Book).

It seems strange that the fifth photograph never turned up. The local newspaper only printed four. Hart would have made a fifth print at the time he developed the pictures. He would have passed that print, along with the other four along to the Harris and Hams. This apparently didn't happen or they lost it. I have found nothing to suggest there was a fifth picture other than the statements made by Hart and a statement by an Air Force technician that is suggestive of three pictures taken in sequence. That means the other two were taken at the same time were in a slightly different sequence.

View from Hart's backyard in the mid-1990s.

Between November 6 and 9, 1951, another investigation of the Lubbock Lights was conducted. Ruppelt, accompanied by Bossert, again interviewed Hart at his home and were told the same story that Hart had told during all the other interrogations.

"Hart's story could not be 'picked apart' because it was entirely logical," according to the official report. "He [Hart] was questioned on

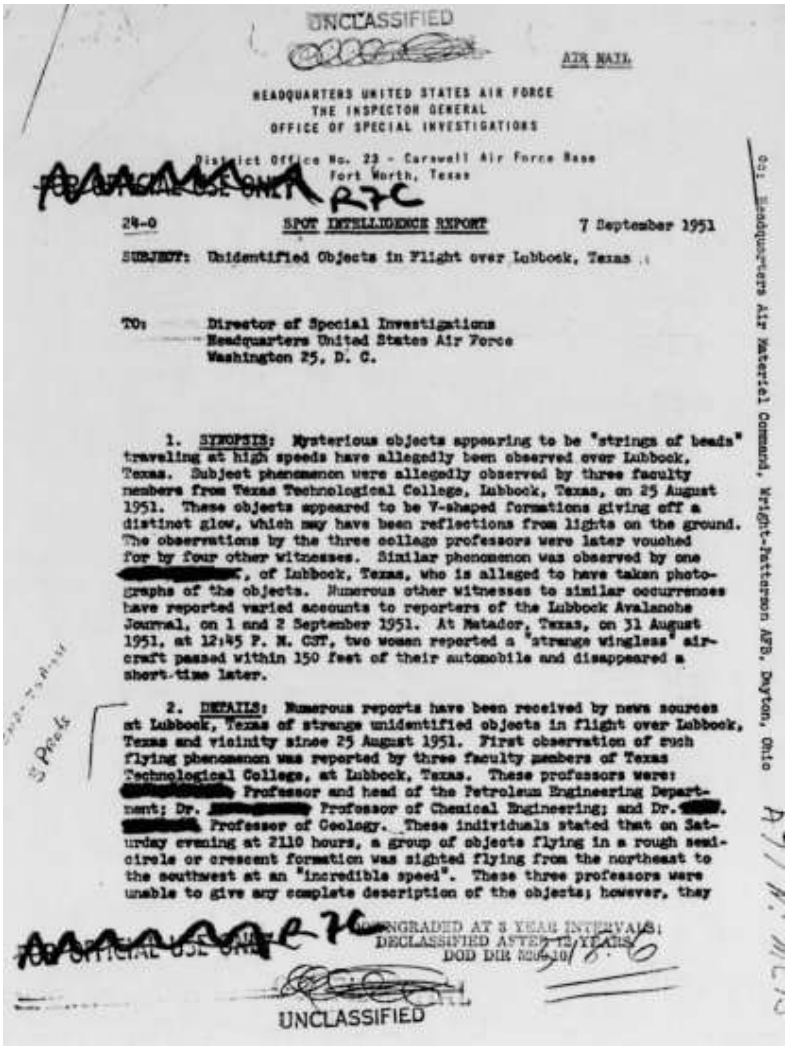
why he did certain things and his answers were all logical, concise, and without hesitation (Ruppelt, 1956)."

Ruppelt also interviewed the college professors. They provided signed statements about what they had seen and done and how they had attempted to gather scientific observations. In addition to recounting several flights, they mentioned an unusual event on September 2. While the flight passed directly overhead, as had the others, and was made up of 15 to 30 lights, one professor noticed an irregularly shaped yellow light at the rear of the formation. That was the only difference any of them had ever observed in relation to the lights.

A technical report, WCEFP-2-4, Physics Branch Sensitometry Unit, dated 29 November 1951, revealed nothing about the sightings other than that the lights photographed by Hart were individual lights and not part of a larger, dark object. The lights moved in relation to one another in the formation. The Air Force physicists did estimate that if the lights had been attached to an object one mile from the camera [or at 5,280 feet of altitude], it would have been 310 feet in diameter. If closer, it would be smaller, and if farther away, it would be larger. These were speculations because there had been no information on the negatives to provide clues to altitude or size.

(It also seemed to suggest that the Albuquerque “flying wing” might not have been a prelude to the Lubbock Lights. Both witnesses believed they saw a shape that had lights attached. That could have been a result of what they believed they had seen rather than what they actually saw.)

Hart had shown military investigators his camera and the report said that the type of lens used was a 50mm f/3.5 Anastor Kodak lens. The film was Plus X and "was exposed for 1/10 sec with lens aperture wide open... the film was processed in Panthermic 777 developer for 15 min."



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AIR MAIL

HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
THE INSPECTOR GENERAL
OFFICE OF SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS

District Office No. 23 - Carswell Air Force Base
Fort Worth, Texas

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24-0 SPOT INTELLIGENCE REPORT 7 September 1951

SUBJECT: Unidentified Objects in Flight over Lubbock, Texas

TO: Director of Special Investigations
Headquarters United States Air Force
Washington 25, D. C.

1. SYNOPSIS: Mysterious objects appearing to be "strings of beads" traveling at high speeds have allegedly been observed over Lubbock, Texas. Subject phenomenon were allegedly observed by three faculty members from Texas Technological College, Lubbock, Texas, on 25 August 1951. These objects appeared to be V-shaped formations giving off a distinct glow, which may have been reflections from lights on the ground. The observations by the three college professors were later vouched for by four other witnesses. Similar phenomenon was observed by one [redacted], of Lubbock, Texas, who is alleged to have taken photographs of the objects. Numerous other witnesses to similar occurrences have reported varied accounts to reporters of the Lubbock Avalanche Journal, on 1 and 2 September 1951. At Matador, Texas, on 31 August 1951, at 12:45 P. M. CST, two women reported a "strange wingless" aircraft passed within 150 feet of their automobile and disappeared a short time later.

2. DETAILS: Numerous reports have been received by news sources at Lubbock, Texas of strange unidentified objects in flight over Lubbock, Texas and vicinity since 25 August 1951. First observation of such flying phenomenon was reported by three faculty members of Texas Technological College, at Lubbock, Texas. These professors were: [redacted] Professor and head of the Petroleum Engineering Department; Dr. [redacted] Professor of Chemical Engineering; and Dr. [redacted] Professor of Geology. These individuals stated that on Saturday evening at 2110 hours, a group of objects flying in a rough semi-circle or crescent formation was sighted flying from the northeast to the southwest at an "incredible speed". These three professors were unable to give any complete description of the objects; however, they

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Air Force synopsis of Lubbock Lights.

The report concluded, "There is relative movement within the formation of spots, so that there are not lights on a fixed object." The important statement, however, came from the final conclusion. "The pattern of spot brightness is such as to prove conclusively that all 3 frames (negatives) - 5, 7, and 8 - were exposed to the same object pattern of spots. (Blue Book)."

An examination of the photographs and the negatives turned up no evidence that Hart was lying. The sequence of shots, as he described them, was corroborated by the negatives. Hart's story was hanging together.

Ruppelt's interview in November was not the last conducted by the military. On December 2, Hart was questioned yet again. This time, according to the documentation in the Blue Book files, Hart was given his

rights. These were explained to him as "The rights of a private citizen under the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution of the United States...he acknowledged his understanding of such rights."

According to the AFOSI report, Hart was interviewed in private and was asked for a written statement. The statement said, "On August 50, 1951 [typographical error in letter of transmittal and not original statement] at about 11:30 P.M. took pictures of strange objects passing overhead from north to south. I saw three separate groups of objects. Two pictures are of the second group. Three are of the third group. The last negative was not found and is not in my possession."

(I had hoped that a search of the newspaper office file on the Lubbock Light case might produce a print of the missing picture. Unfortunately, some so-called UFO researcher had beat me to Lubbock and stolen the whole file. A search of newspapers, hoping that someone had printed it from a wire photo failed to locate it. Evidently the military hoped they could break Hart's story which was a continuing obstacle to the bird explanation. If a professional photographer could not get a picture of birds at night, how had a teenaged amateur done it? The obvious answer was that Hart had not photographed birds. If so, that meant the objects he had photographed were unidentified. The answer, whatever it was, lay in another direction).

Documentation in the Blue Book files, reveals an extraordinary effort went into investigating the Lubbock case, as opposed to many of the other investigations conducted by Air Force officers. Murray S. Sturgis, the Air Adjutant at Carswell AFB [Fort Worth, Texas] wrote, "Reference OSI Letter 24-0 dated 7 September 1951 to OSI, HQ USAF, concerning unidentified aircraft at Lubbock, Texas. Request A-2 [Air Intelligence Officer] forward by air mail as expeditiously as possible form 112 on subjects Carl Hart, Jr., Mrs. Tom Tilson, Mrs. M.G. Bethard; if possible forward by air mail original negatives of photographs Carl Hart, Jr., is stated to have taken..."

The "Report of Investigation" was written by Howard N. Bossert. He said that he, along with Lieutenant John Farley interviewed Hart at his home (this in addition to the other interviews with Hart at his home). Bossert reported that he found Hart to be "a very intelligent young man, very interested in photography, which is a hobby. He seemed sincere in his efforts to relate all incidents to the best of his ability."

Bossert learned that Hart had also seen the lights on September 1, but he hadn't photographed them then. At that time, no one was talking about UFOs in relation to the lights. Although the lights looked the same, Hart thought they were at a greater altitude and were in a single line. They flew from the northwest to the southeast.

Bossert's report also covered the sighting in Matador, Texas by Mrs. Tom Tilson on August 31. The pear-shaped object was aluminum or silver in color and had a port or door at the point where the object began to taper toward the smaller end. There was only the single object, moving through the sky without sound, exhaust or smoke. The object tilted, climbed rapidly, and disappeared in a matter of seconds.

Tilson's daughter, Mrs. Berthard (the only name provided in the Project Blue Book file), stopped the car and got out. She thought the object was about 45 feet in diameter, and said that it wasn't a balloon, jet, or any other conventional object.

The sighting, although grouped with the Lubbock Lights, seems to be related to the Lubbock case only by timing and location. Matador, Texas is not far from Lubbock. The Matador sighting is still carried in the Blue Book files as an unidentified.

By the end of the year, the Air Force investigation began to wind down. Investigators had spoken to all the witnesses several times, concentrating on Hart. After they interviewed Bryant, the man who had seen the plover, and to another west Texan, T.E. Snider, who reported he had seen the lights but identified them as ducks, the official answer became birds.

In still another, later report, Air Force investigators wrote, "It was concluded that birds, with street lights reflecting from them, were the probable cause of these sightings. The angular velocity was less. In all instances, the witnesses were located in an area where their eyes were dark-adapted, thus making the objects appear brighter."

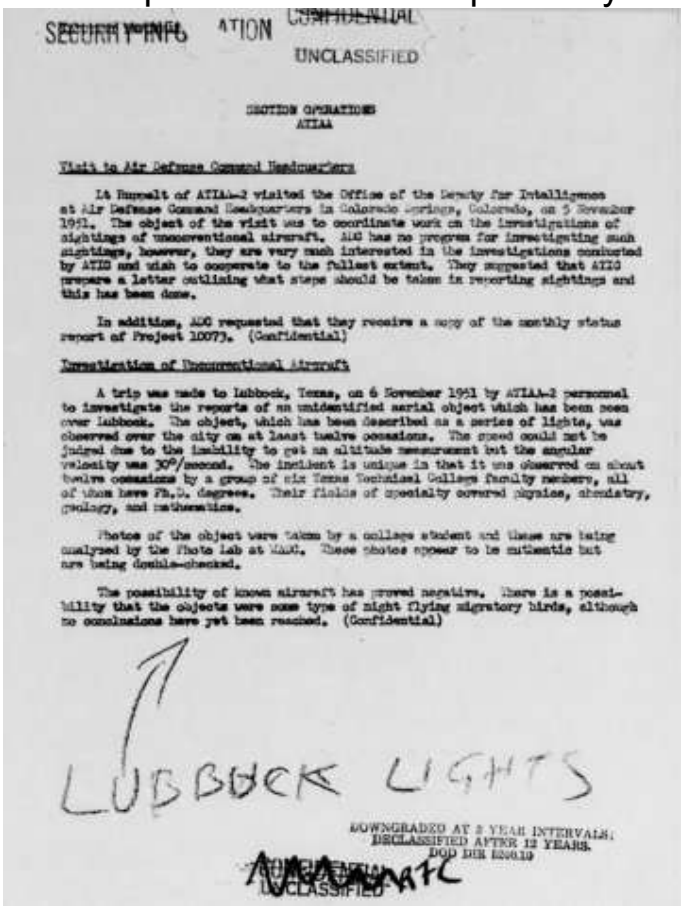
Of course, that conclusion overlooks the fact that there are no migratory birds in the Lubbock area at that time of year. Loren Smith at Texas Tech told me that there are ducks that fly in V-formations in the area in late August. They just aren't migratory.

The Glossy Iris, for example, inhabits west Texas and does fly in the proper formation as suggested by the photographs. The problem, however, is that species is reddish-maroon and has no white to reflect the street lights no matter how bright those street lights might be. The

Glossy Iris is not satisfactory as the explanation. In fact, there are no birds in west Texas that are satisfactory as an explanation for all the sightings.

The report continues, "Mr. Hart, when taking his pictures, had to do so by 'panning' his camera. Panning is quite difficult, and the relative high degree of success of this photographer is further indication that the angular velocity of the objects was not as high as estimated."

The report concludes, "The kind of birds responsible for this sighting is not known, but it is highly probable that they were ducks or plover. Since plover do not usually fly in formations of more than six or seven, ducks become the more probable..." Nor do plover fly in a “V” formation.



SECURITY INFORMATION CONFIDENTIAL

UNCLASSIFIED

SECTION OPERATIONS
ATIAA

Visit to Air Defense Command Headquarters

1Lt Russell of ATIAA-2 visited the Office of the Deputy for Intelligence at Air Defense Command Headquarters in Colorado Springs, Colorado, on 5 November 1951. The object of the visit was to coordinate work on the investigations of sightings of unconventional aircraft. ADC has no program for investigating such sightings, however, they are very much interested in the investigations conducted by ATIC and wish to cooperate to the fullest extent. They suggested that ATIC prepare a letter outlining what steps should be taken in reporting sightings and this has been done.

In addition, ADC requested that they receive a copy of the monthly status report of Project 10077. (Confidential)

Investigation of Unconventional Aircraft

A trip was made to Lubbock, Texas, on 6 November 1951 by ATIAA-2 personnel to investigate the reports of an unidentified aerial object which has been seen over Lubbock. The object, which has been described as a series of lights, was observed over the city on at least twelve occasions. The speed could not be judged due to the inability to get an altitude measurement but the angular velocity was 30°/second. The incident is unique in that it was observed on about twelve occasions by a group of six Texas Technical College faculty members, all of whom have Ph.D. degrees. Their fields of specialty covered physics, chemistry, geology, and mathematics.

Photos of the object were taken by a college student and these are being analyzed by the Photo Lab at WAFB. These photos appear to be authentic but are being double-checked.

The possibility of known aircraft has proved negative. There is a possibility that the objects were some type of night flying migratory birds, although no conclusions have yet been reached. (Confidential)

LUBBOCK LIGHTS

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

UNCLASSIFIED

Contrary to Air Force statements, this document proves that some sightings were classified at the time of reporting. They were downgraded at a later time.

Such a solution might be the proper explanation for some of the sightings, especially those by Bryant and Snider. There might be other reports from the Lubbock area that are explained by the birds, but certainly not all of them. Each sighting should be investigated as a separate event because each was a separate event. Their relation to one

another is simply the timing and the location. A solution for one set of sightings does not translate into a solution for the others. When that is completed, those left over should then be seen as the pattern.

The photographs taken by Hart show this. Clearly, the pictures taken by him do not show birds. Experimentation by professionals was unable to duplicate the photos taken by Hart. Project Blue Book records, however, list the case as solved - as birds.

Dr. Donald Menzel, rabid debunker.

But that wasn't the last of it. In June 1952, Dr. Donald H. Menzel, the Harvard astronomer and a rabid opponent of the alien visitation theory, published an article in *Look* claiming that the Lubbock Lights were not birds, but reflections of the city's lights... "mirages caused by atmospheric conditions known as 'temperature inversion.'" This is, of course, the same explanation that would be used to solve the mystery of the Washington Nationals that were seen over Washington, D.C. in the summer of 1952 a few months later.

Menzel, using chemicals, was able to reproduce what he claimed were the Lubbock Lights in his laboratory. His pictures, taken of stationary objects in his lab, showed lights in a similar formation, but the lights in his photographs were more diffused than those taken by Hart.

Interestingly, the early television show, *Science Fiction Theater*, had a story about UFO-like lights over a city. In the end, a scientist, using an aquarium filled with two chemicals to duplicate the temperature inversion, reproduced the objects seen by the story's witnesses. This episode was clearly based on the Lubbock Lights and used Menzel's theory as the basis for the tale's explanation.

Dr. E.F. George, one of the scientists who had actually seen the lights, disagreed with Menzel's explanation. He said, "I don't believe what I saw was a reflection from street lights." Since he had actually seen them, his testimony should take precedence over Menzel's claims.

Ducker, who was involved in the original sightings, said that he and the others had never tried to say what it was they had seen, but only that

they had seen something. He pointed out that a reproduction in the laboratory would not mean that the original sightings were "trickery."

Ruppelt, in his book, examines the whole of the Lubbock Lights case from a unique perspective. He was one of the Air Force officers involved in the original investigation. He spoke to the individuals within weeks of the events, to the experts who could provide some information about the case, to scientists who might have a solution for the sightings and saw the area where Hart took his photographs. Unlike those who followed, he was on the scene which is often one of the most helpful aspects in an investigation.

Of the photographs by Hart, Ruppelt (1956) wrote, "...the investigation ended at a blank wall. My official conclusion, which was later given to the press, was that, 'The photos were never proven to be a hoax but neither were they proven to be genuine.' There is no definite answer."

Of the other sightings, Ruppelt wrote, "Personally I thought that the professor's lights might have been some kind of bird reflecting from mercury-vapor street lights, but I was wrong. They weren't birds, they weren't refracted light, but they weren't spaceships. The lights that the professors saw - the backbone of the Lubbock Light series - have been positively identified as a very commonplace and easily explainable natural phenomena."

Reese Air Force Base, near Lubbock, where the investigation had been centered.

Ruppelt then explained, in his 1956 book, that he couldn’t offer the final solution because it came from a professor who would be easily identified if the solution was published. Ruppelt said that it makes perfect

sense to him, but he was going to honor his promise to the scientist that he wouldn’t use that explanation.

In the years before his death Ruppelt received letters from UFO investigators who wanted to know the final answer. Always Ruppelt answered the same way. He would not violate the confidence. But when Ruppelt died at a relatively young age, he left notes and documents, and in those notes and documents, now housed at the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, is Ruppelt's answer. The professors saw - fireflies.

Ruppelt's explanation is as ridiculous as that of all the others. It does not explain the situation nor does it explain the photographs. And, it doesn't explain why the professors only saw the fireflies at the end of August and the beginning of September 1951. Did the conditions around Lubbock change to produce an abundance of fireflies that year and then return to the original conditions so that they didn't fly over the city in later years. And when was the last time that fireflies were seen in any sort of formation. They might be seen as individual insects buzzing about, but not in any sort of V-shaped formation. Not to mention that they would have been described as flashing lights rather than steady as nearly all the witnesses claimed.

In 1977, Donald Menzel, in his book co-authored with Ernest H. Taves, *The UFO Enigma*, had given up the temperature inversion explanation. He devoted less than a paragraph to the Lubbock Lights, dismissing Hart's photographs by writing, "...we believe that some of the Lubbock photographs may have been hoaxes." He further wrote that this was in no way inconsistent with the conclusion reached by some of the Lubbock viewers themselves, that flying flocks of birds illuminated by city lights produced the apparitions.

Menzel provides not a single shred of evidence to suggest that the photographs are hoaxes. No one in the Lubbock area had been able to reproduce them under the same conditions that faced Hart. The various official investigators and newspaper reporters were not able to break his story, and in fact, threatened him from the very beginning. First, Harris, of the *Lubbock Avalanche*, told Hart of the consequences of perpetrating a fraud. Later, Air Force officers told him of his rights under the Fifth Amendment to the Constitution. In all those cases Hart maintained that his story was true and that he had not faked anything. No one ever offered any proof that he had faked them. Just allegations as a way of dismissing the photographs without the necessity of explaining them.

The Lubbock Lights case is a textbook example of a high strangeness UFO case. It began as a mysterious case with highly qualified witnesses. The college professors, given the diversity of their disciplines that provided them with unique backgrounds, were considered experts. They were familiar with the sky and the atmosphere around them. Yet they were unable to identify the lights.

Others, in widely scattered locations, saw the lights on the first night, and on subsequent nights. Some of them identified the lights they saw as birds. There is no question that some of the reports were of birds, identified as such by the witnesses themselves.

Armed with that information, the investigators made a tremendous leap of logic. If some of the identified sightings were of birds, then all of them were of birds. There is no reason to make that assumption, especially when considering the Hart photographs. Those pictures prove that birds are not responsible for all the sightings in the area.

When confronted with evidence that is difficult to explain, the philosophy inside the Project Blue Book seemed to be to offer many explanations to see if one will stick, especially in the later years. Publish those explanations as if there is no question that they are accurate even when they are not. Public perception then, is that the case has been solved even when it has not. It doesn't matter if part of the public believes it was birds, or temperature inversions, or even a hoax. An answer has been offered and some of the people believe it.

Often times, long after the event, a man who was responsible for a fake photograph, will confess. Those who have faked photographs as teenagers have come forward as adults to explain the situation. But Carl Hart is not among that rather large number. Interviewed again, in 1993, Hart told me that he had no explanation for the pictures. I asked if he believed in flying saucers. Hart said, "I don't particularly disbelieve." When asked if he knew what the lights were, he told me, "I really don't."

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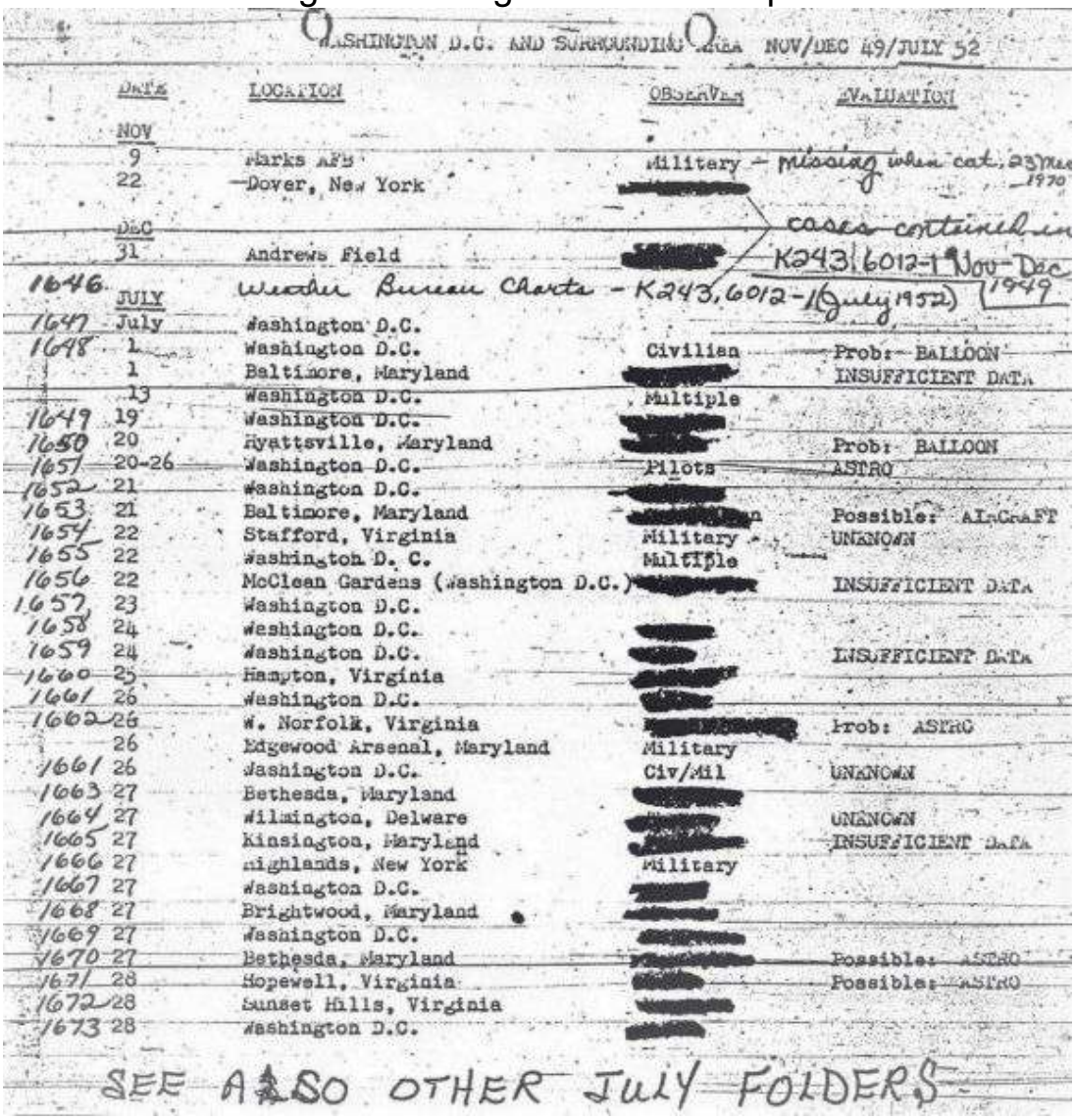
Chapter 6: The Washington Nationals, July 1952

Although the original plan had been to look at the best cases in the Blue Book files, which suggested those labeled as “unidentified,” there are some that demand further scrutiny even when solutions have been suggested. Such are the sightings known as the Washington Nationals, so named because the radar facilities in which the majority of the radar sightings were made were located at Washington National Airport now known as the Reagan Washington National Airport.



WASHINGTON D.C. AND SURROUNDING AREA NOV/DEC 49/JULY 52

	DATE	LOCATION	OBSERVER	EVALUATION
	NOV			
	9	Marks AFB	Military	missing when cat. 23 Nov 1970
	22	Dover, New York	[redacted]	
	DEC			cases continued in K243.6012-1 Nov-Dec 1949
	31	Andrews Field	[redacted]	
1646	JULY	Weather Bureau Charts - K243.6012-1 (July 1952)		
1647	July	Washington D.C.		
1648	1	Washington D.C.	Civilian	Prob: BALLOON
	1	Baltimore, Maryland	[redacted]	INSUFFICIENT DATA
	13	Washington D.C.	Multiple	
1649	19	Washington D.C.	[redacted]	
1650	20	Hyattsville, Maryland	[redacted]	Prob: BALLOON
1651	20-26	Washington D.C.	Pilots	ASTRO
1652	21	Washington D.C.	[redacted]	
1653	21	Baltimore, Maryland	[redacted]	Possible: AIRCRAFT
1654	22	Stafford, Virginia	Military	UNKNOWN
1655	22	Washington D. C.	Multiple	
1656	22	McClean Gardens (Washington D.C.)	[redacted]	INSUFFICIENT DATA
1657	23	Washington D.C.		
1658	24	Washington D.C.	[redacted]	
1659	24	Washington D.C.	[redacted]	INSUFFICIENT DATA
1660	25	Hampton, Virginia	[redacted]	
1661	26	Washington D.C.	[redacted]	
1662	26	W. Norfolk, Virginia	[redacted]	Prob: ASTRO
	26	Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland	Military	
1661	26	Washington D.C.	Civ/Mil	UNKNOWN
1663	27	Bethesda, Maryland	[redacted]	
1664	27	Wilmington, Delware	[redacted]	UNKNOWN
1665	27	Kinsington, Maryland	[redacted]	INSUFFICIENT DATA
1666	27	Highlands, New York	Military	
1667	27	Washington D.C.	[redacted]	
1668	27	Brightwood, Maryland	[redacted]	
1669	27	Washington D.C.	[redacted]	
1670	27	Bethesda, Maryland	[redacted]	Possible: ASTRO
1671	28	Hopewell, Virginia	[redacted]	Possible: ASTRO
1672	28	Sunset Hills, Virginia	[redacted]	
1673	28	Washington D.C.	[redacted]	

SEE ALSO OTHER JULY FOLDERS

A single Project Card was unavailable given the nature of the sightings. This is an Index Page for July 1952 providing information on many of the sightings.

This all began when, according to the CAA's (forerunner of the Federal Aeronautics Administration (FAA)) logbook, two radars at the Air Routing and Traffic Control Center (ARTC) picked up eight unidentified targets near Andrews Air Force Base at 11:40 P.M. on the evening of Saturday, July 19, 1952 (Radar Spots, 1952). Air Traffic Controller Edward Nugent spotted seven blips clustered together in the corner of his radar scope.

Nugent believed that they were in an area about fifteen miles south-southwest of Washington. These were not airplanes because, at one point, they accelerated far faster than conventional aircraft could fly. First, they moved along at only a hundred miles an hour, then suddenly would seem to accelerate to fantastic speeds. One of the objects was tracked, according to the calculations made at the Center, at 7,000 miles an hour (Ruppelt, 1956). In 1952 there was nothing that could fly at that speed that would be in the skies above Washington.

Nugent then called the senior air traffic controller on duty, Harry C. Barnes. Barnes later wrote, “We knew immediately that a very strange situation existed.... They [the unidentified blips on the radar] followed no set course [and] were not in any formation, and we only seemed to be able to track them for about three miles at a time. The individual pip would seem to disappear from the scope at intervals. Later I realized that if these objects had made any sudden burst of extremely high speed, that would account for them disappearing from the scope... (Clark, 2018 p. 1250; Barnes, 1952)” And that would put them in the range of the 7,000 mile-an-hour-bursts of speed noticed by Nugent.

The first thing for the controllers to do was check the radar equipment to make sure that it was functioning properly. Two other controllers, both trained in basic maintenance, found nothing wrong with the gear. Barnes then called his counterpart at the airport at Tower Central. That facility was located about a quarter mile away, on the same airfield, and if the radars at the ARTC were malfunctioning, those at Central should not be affected. Howard Cocklin told Barnes that they had spotted, and were tracking, the same objects. Cocklin also said that he had looked out the windows of the control tower and saw one of the objects high overhead. He described the object later as a bright orange light but he could see no

shape behind the light and could offer no other details about it (Blue Book; Keyhoe, 1953).

Barnes next called Andrews Air Force Base which is nearby and asked if they had anything on their radars, but was told that the only thing being tracked by them was a C-47 (the military version of the DC-3) that was about an hour away from Washington, scheduled to land at Andrews. The radar operators weren't seeing anything out of the ordinary on their screens. Moments later, Barnes made another call to Andrews and suggested that they look outside because there was something strange in the sky near the Air Force base. Airman William Brady looked out, to the south, and saw, what he later described as "an object which appeared to be like an orange ball of fire, trailing a tail. It appeared to be about two miles south and one-half miles from the Andrews range. It was very bright and definite and unlike anything I had ever seen... (Blue Book)"

Washington National Air Traffic Controllers.

He tried to get the others in the Andrews facility with him to look outside to verify the sighting, but even as he shouted at them, the brightly glowing object stopped and then just seemed to vanish. According to Brady, it "took off at an unbelievable speed," as it disappeared in a split second (Blue Book).

Moments later, according to Brady "I saw another one, same description. As the one before, it made an arc-like pattern and then disappeared. I only saw each object for about a second (Blue Book)." Again, he was the only one to see this object.

No one else in the tower saw any of those lights even with Brady's help. Later, there would be other sightings in the tower, but for the

moment, Brady was alone in his observations. That might have been a result of the events happening so quickly, or it might have been that what Brady thought unusual was nothing more mundane than stars seen through a thin layer of haze that would periodically obscure them. That suggestion would later be offered by Air Force investigators.

Joseph DeBoves, who was also on the scene as a civilian control tower operator at Andrews, said that Brady became excited during one of his telephone conversations, yelling, "There one goes." DeBoves believed that Brady was watching nothing more interesting than a meteor.

On the other hand, there is a memo in the Project Blue Book files that notes a sighting from the ATRC, that is Washington National, at about 12:30 a.m. of “an orange disk about 3,000 feet... at 360 degrees [due north].” That could be independent confirmation of Brady’s sightings made at Andrews.

Just after midnight, Airman Second Class (A/2c) Bill Goodman, called the Andrews control tower to tell them he was watching a bright orange light about the size of a softball that was gaining and losing altitude as it zipped through the night sky. This seemed to be further confirmation that something unusual was in the sky over the Washington, D.C. area and it seemed to corroborate the visual sightings made by Brady.

About two in the morning on July 20, the Radar Officer, Captain Harold C. Way, at Andrews Approach Control learned that the ARTC had a target east of Andrews. He went outside and saw a strange light which he didn't believe to be a star. He said that he thought it was changing colors, from “red to orange to green to red again.” He said that it seemed to rapidly lose altitude, and then climb again. Later, however, he went back out, and this time, according to what he told Air Force investigators, decided that he was, in fact, looking at a star (Blue Book).

Bolling Air Force Base today.

Bolling Air Force Base, another Air Force installation in the Washington, D.C. area, became involved briefly about the time Way went outside. The tower operator there said that he saw a "roundish" object drifting low in the sky to the southeast of Bolling. There were no radar confirmations of the sighting. It did, however, now involve a third government facility in the sightings that were being made that evening.

The ATRC radar operators at National Airport began to detect targets near Bolling and informed the tower operators, including SSGT Richard Lacava, the operations dispatcher, at Bolling. In the mobile control tower, that is a truck mounted control tower that can be repositioned around the air field, SSGT Don Wilson spotted a round, white-amber colored light that he believed was about seven miles to the southeast of the airfield. He said that it was about the intensity of a star. It drifted slowly and though visible for a few minutes, Wilson could see nothing other than the bright light.

In still another sighting from that area, a guard going off-duty saw, in the southwest, an object that he said, “Looked to be the size of a golf ball... bright orange in color. The object moved from the west to the northeast in a half circle pattern and was traveling at such speed that I knew that it could not be a jet aircraft.... It would be hard to judge the

altitude the object was flying because it seemed to lose and gain altitude. The object moved in this pattern several times and then disappeared into the west. From the time I saw the object and then lost it, I would say it was about 15 to 20 minutes. (Blue Book)" This meant that the guard had gotten a very good look at the object. This was no fleeting light seen for only a few seconds.

Back at Andrews, Staff Sgt. Charles Davenport spotted an orange-red light to the south of the base. According to his statement, "It would appear to stand still, then make an abrupt change of direction and altitude (Blue Book)." Davenport called the tower and the men there also saw the object before it vanished in a burst of speed.

The ARTC again told the controllers at Andrews that they still had the targets on their scopes. There is conflicting data in the files, and in other source documents, because some of the reports suggest that the Andrews radar showed nothing, while other reports claim they did. Now DeBoves, and two others in the tower, Monte Banning and John P. Izzo, Jr., swept the sky with binoculars but could see no lights other than the stars.

There were some multiple radar facility sightings. At one point during the night, the radars in the ARTC, the National Airport Tower, and at Andrews all were fixed on an object hovering over the Riverdale Radio beacon. For thirty seconds it remained there, giving the radar operators in all three locations the chance to check their readings and their equipment against one another. The target vanished from the three radar screens at the same time. This suggested to the men that they were looking at something real and not some sort of a maintenance problem or malfunction or a weather-related phenomenon.

The sightings lasted through the night, and during that time, the crews of several airliners saw the lights right where the radars showed them to be. Tower operators also saw them, and jet fighters were brought in for attempted intercepts to identify the objects. Associated Press stories written hours after the sightings claimed that no intercepts had been attempted that night but those stories were inaccurate (Jets Alerted, 1952). Documents in the Project Blue Book files, as well as eyewitnesses, confirm the attempted intercepts. Barnes, in fact, believed that the UFOs were monitoring the radio traffic because, about 3:00 a.m. all the mysterious targets suddenly disappeared. Moments later, two F-94 jet interceptors, scrambled from Newcastle Air Force Base, appeared.

Although the interceptor pilots searched for the UFOs, they found, and saw, nothing. Low fuel finally forced them to return to their base. As the jets disappeared, the UFOs reappeared.

At about 3:30 a.m., SSGT C. T. Davenport, an aircraft mechanic, saw an object at treetop level. This one was bluish-white in color and moved erratically. He said, “Three times I saw a red object leave the silver object at a high rate of speed and move east, out of sight (Blue Book).”

It wasn’t just the men on the ground, in the towers at Andrews and Reagan Washington National, or at the radar screens who were seeing the UFOs. Airline pilots were also spotting the lights. Typical of the sightings were those made by Captain Casey Pierman on Capital Airlines flight 807. He was on a flight between Washington and Martinsburg, West Virginia, at 1:15 A.M. on July 20, when he, and the rest of the crew saw seven objects flash across the sky in front of them. Pierman said, "They were like falling stars without trails (“Washington Radar Reports, 1952)."

Capital Airline officials said that National Airport radar picked up the objects and asked Pierman to keep an eye on them. Shortly after takeoff, Pierman radioed that he had the objects in sight.

Capital Airlines aircraft.

He was flying at 180 to 200 mph, and reported the objects were traveling at tremendous speed. Official Air Force records confirm this,

which means that Pierman did make the report to military officers.

Another Capital Airlines pilot, Captain Howard Dermott, on Capital Flight 610, reported a single light followed him from Herndon, Virginia, to within four miles of National Airport (Blue Book). Both the ARTC and the National Tower confirmed that an unidentified target followed the aircraft to within four miles of landing. At about the same time, an Air Force radar at Andrews AFB was tracking eight additional unknown objects as they flew over the Washington area.

Repeatedly, throughout the night, Barnes attempted to alert various military authorities about the series of UFO sightings. He wanted the closest Air Force intelligence officer alerted so that a military record of the sightings, at the civilian facilities, could be created. He spoke to the duty officers who would only tell him that the information was being forwarded up the chain of command and that they had no authority to do anything else (Barnes, 1952). It is clear, however, that military officials were responding to the sightings, otherwise, there would have been no attempted intercepts.

Later, Barnes would tell investigators, both for the military and for the University of Colorado's Condon Committee, that the experience of finding unidentified radar and visual targets, where there was supposed to be nothing in the air, frightening (Gillmor, 1969).

Washington's National Airport.

Barnes also mentioned that the UFOs had flown in the vicinity of the White House, which would later become a point of interest to many.

Barnes also said that, at the time, no one in the facility with him believed they were watching Russian aircraft, military experiments, or

visitors from another world. Instead, all the men were puzzled by the events. And, though Barnes seemed to have ruled out manufactured craft, he said that everyone believed that the objects were under intelligence control.

Just before daylight, about four in the morning, after repeated requests from the ARTC, another F-94 interceptor arrived on the scene, but it was too little too late. All the targets were gone. Although the flight crew made a short search of the local area, they found nothing unusual or exciting and returned to their base quickly.

The radar returns, and UFO sightings, continued almost to dawn. At about 5:30 a.m., seven or eight of the UFOs were seen on the scopes at the ARTC. They faded from sight quickly. At about this same time, E.W. Chambers, a radio engineer, saw five huge disks circling in a loose formation over the Washington, D.C. area. He clearly saw shapes of the objects, rather than just lights in the distance. The disks tilted upwards and disappeared climbing steeply (Blue Book). His description of the objects and their maneuvers would become an important part of the case as the Air Force tried to suggest temperature inversion.

During that night, apparently the three Washington, D.C. radar facilities only once reported a target that was seen by all the radars at the same time. There were, however, a number of times when the ARTC radar and the Reagan Washington National tower radars had simultaneous contacts. It also seems that the radars were displaying the same targets that were seen by the crews of the Capital Airlines flights in the area. What it boils down to is that multiple radars and multiple eyewitnesses were showing and seeing objects in the sky over Washington, D.C.

Barnes, the main controller on duty that night would write:

> [The UFOs] became most active around the planes we saw on the scope... [T]hey acted like a bunch of small kids out playing... directed by some innate curiosity. At times they moved as a group or cluster, at other times as individuals over widely scattered areas... There is no other conclusion that I can reach but that for six hours there were at least 10 unidentified flying objects moving above Washington. They were not ordinary aircraft. I could tell that by their movement on the scope. I can safely deduce that they performed gyrations which no known aircraft could perform. By this I mean that our scopes showed that they could make right angle turns and

> complete reversals of flight. Nor in my opinion could any natural phenomena such as shooting stars, electrical disturbances or clouds account for these spots on our radar.

Barnes would confirm the information later, as he talked to the investigators for the Condon Committee. It was nearly fifteen years after the events, and Barnes told the investigators that:

> A number of objects, some seven or eight, would be in a place as a group, then seem to go over to an aircraft to take a look. If the aircraft attempted evasive action by turning, the objects would turn too. They seemed, furthermore, to have monitored messages between the aircraft and the tower. When a particular pilot was told to look for an object the pilot would see it, but would report that it was zooming off at just about the time at just about the time at which the target also disappeared from the radar set. Many of the objects were extremely maneuverable (Gillmor, 1969).

Barnes told the Condon investigator that he didn't believe that the objects they had detected were "ghost" or weather-related phenomena. Barnes ruled out a malfunction as well, telling the investigators that Reagan Washington National, Andrews, and Andrews approach control had all independently sighted the objects in the same place about the same time. Barnes said that all the radars were operating normally and that men at all three facilities were in contact with one another and confirming the other sightings. Even though it was a Saturday night crew, they were all highly trained and experienced in radar operations.

The only downside was that none of the radars used that night had any height finding capability. They could record the direction to the object, and by knowing the sweep time of the scope's antenna, they could determine the speed. They just didn't know how high the objects were. That made the attempted intercepts a little more difficult for the fighter crews.

Importantly, the Condon investigator learned that during one of the attempted intercepts, the radar onboard the jet fighter obtained a lock on one of the objects. That increased the number of independent radars involved in the night's activities. The pilot, however, did not have a visual sighting.

The first night of the Washington Nationals had ended with the controllers frustrated by the lack of response by the military. Both visual and radar sightings were made, often with an object seen in the sky

where the radar suggested that it should be. Radars at three different locations picked up the returns, but only once, as mentioned, did all three radars display the same objects. And, only once, as mentioned, did an aircraft's onboard radar acquire an object.

Importantly, there were attempted intercepts made, but the fighters were required to scramble from Air Force bases outside the Washington, D.C. area because the runways at Andrews were closed for repairs (Blue Book; Ruppelt, 1956). That certainly slowed the response time, and required that requests for the intercepts travel, somewhat slowly, through the chain of command, first up toward the Pentagon, and then down to the local air base. However, the fighters did reach the area, but, unfortunately, those pilots, on those intercepts didn't see anything unusual. Of course, the radar operators said that all the targets had disappeared by the time the fighters arrived.

The night had ended, and the sightings on the radars at the various facilities had ended. But that was only for a short period of time. The first round of the second wave of sightings over Washington, D.C. on July 26, didn't begin at night, nor were they first seen by the radar operators at National Airport. At about 2:30 p.m. two radar operators at Langley AFB, not that far from Washington, D.C., watched an object on their radar scope for about two minutes. They estimated that it approached Langley from the south at a speed of 2,600 miles an hour at an altitude just under five thousand feet. It disappeared from the radar scopes when it was only eight miles away which might have been a function of the speed of the object and the location of the radar antenna (Blue Book).

Twenty minutes later, at about ten minutes of three, those same radar operators watched another target for about four minutes as it headed toward the east. It suddenly stopped, hovered for two minutes, and then continued to the east, finally disappearing from the scope about fifteen miles away. The operators believed that the object had simply dropped below five thousand feet which was the lower limit of the radar's capability.

They had also tried to spot the object using binoculars but had been unable to find it. They noted that the return on the scope was larger than that of an aircraft and that it had a fuzzy appearance, suggesting to some that the blip was the result of the weather rather than a solid object flying over the area. These radar operators were experienced and had the

return been weather related, they would have determined that (Blue Book).

At about 8:15 p.m., a pilot and stewardess on a National Airlines flight saw several glowing objects through the cockpit windows. They described them like the “glow of a cigarette (Clark, 2018).” Both said the objects were high above them and were moving about a hundred miles an hour.

About 10:30 p.m. (though some sources suggest it was early as 8:00 p.m.) the same radar operators who had been on duty at Washington National the week before again spotted several slow-moving targets on their radar scopes. These objects were spread out over Washington in a large arc. This time the controllers carefully marked each of the unidentifieds. When they were all marked, they

called the Tower and learned the unidentified targets were on those scopes too. As had happened the week before, a call to Andrews confirmed that they, too, were watching the unknowns. Three radars at three facilities were tracking the UFOs.

The radar scopes at National Airport.

During this time, the ARTC requested that a B-25 in the area check on several radar targets. The crew saw nothing even after repeated attempts, and precise directions from the radar center. In what might be an important clue, one of the pilots said that “each time the tower man advised us we were passing the UFO, we noticed that we were over one certain section of the Potomac River, just east of Alexandria. Finally, we were asked to visually check the terrain below for anything which might cause such an illusion. We looked and the only object we could see where the radar had a

target turned out to be the Wilson Lines steamboat trip to Mount Vernon (Blue Book).” The pilot was convinced that the radar was “sure as hell picking up the steamboat.” It was a slow-moving object that could account for the sighting.

At some point, the senior controller, Harry Barnes, alerted the military that the unidentified targets were back. Given the circumstances the Saturday before, and given the number of sightings reported in the area during the last week, several military people were already on alert. The first to respond to the sightings was Al Chop, the civilian Pentagon spokesman about UFOs. Later in the evening, Major Dewey Fournet, the Pentagon UFO liaison officer, and a Naval officer, Lt. John Holcomb, made their way to National Airport. Holcomb was an electronics specialist temporarily assigned to the Air Force Directorate of Intelligence (Ruppelt, 1956). His expertise would be valuable in the hours to come.

An hour later, with targets being tracked continually, the controllers called for jet interceptors. Al Chop told me that he was in communication with the main basement command post at the Pentagon at that time (Interview, 1995). He requested that interceptors be sent. As a civilian, he could only make the request and then wait for the general or admiral in command at the Pentagon to make the official decision. Chop, however, was known at the Pentagon so that those in the command post listened to what he had to say. The situation, at that point, was only mildly better than it had been a week earlier but the military was, at the very least, on alert.

Al Chop

As happened the week before, there was a delay as the request traveled up the chain of command, but by midnight, two F-94s were on station over Washington. At that point, the reporters who had assembled to observe the situation were asked,

by Chop, to leave the radar room at National Airport because classified radio and intercept procedures would be in operation. Chop felt that the reporters could do their jobs without being privy to the classified operational procedures that would be used that night (Ruppelt, 1956).

Although that fact was well reported, that the reporters had been chased from the radar room, Ed Ruppelt in his book (1956), *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects*, later wrote, "I knew this was absurd because any radio ham worth his salt could build equipment and listen in on any intercept. The real reason for the press dismissal, I learned, was that not a few people in the radar room were positive that this night would be the big night in UFO history - the night when a pilot would close in on and get a good look at a UFO - and they didn't want the press to be in on it."

Although Ruppelt didn't report it, the real reason was that orders had been given to fire on the UFOs. Documentation available suggests that the order had been given to knock one down. If that happened, Chop didn't want the reporters to listen to that over the secure and scrambled communications being used.

The situation then, wasn't quite as simple as Ruppelt made it out to be. Chop wasn't worried about the reporters overhearing the supposedly classified intercept conversations, or watching the intercepts as they played out on the radar scopes. He was afraid one of the UFOs might end up in the hands of American intelligence (Interview, 1995). He didn't want that reported in the newspapers which would have meant that it would have been reported by foreign intelligence services as well. That could lead to some embarrassing questions.

Chop said, "There were two intercepts. One approximately… it was sometime about two o'clock in the morning and the other one about three or four."

Chop told me about the first of these intercepts. The fighters, according to him, came from New Castle, Delaware. "The first two that came in, when they came in, we had about, I'd say, fourteen or fifteen UFOs, targets that we could not identify on the radar scopes. We had them marked. Well, we didn't mark the unknowns. They marked the known flights. Everything else on the scope was a UFO, of course.... Now [Andrews] were tracking the objects or what appeared to be the same objects. We couldn't conclusively say they were exactly the same but the conversations between the flight controllers at Washington

National and at [Andrews], they would say, ‘Do you have these four up at the southeast section of your scopes,’ and [Andrews] would say, ‘We have those.’”

Chop continued, talking about that first intercept. “We had one pilot going north and one going south. And the pilot in the northern sector... he could see nothing although we did have UFOs, blips, there. The one in the south... the flight controllers kind of directed him to them, we had a little cluster of them, five or six of them and he suddenly reports that he sees some lights... He said they are very brilliant blue-white lights. And he was going to close on them to get a better look at them, which he did.”

Chop, describing the situation years later for me, said, "The minute the first two interceptors appeared on our scope all our unknowns disappeared. It was like they just wiped them all off. All our other flights, all the known flights were still on the scope... We watched these two planes leave. When they were out of our range, immediately we got our UFOs back. (Interview 1995)" There is no terrestrial explanation for this.

Eventually all the Pentagon representatives were assembled at National Airport. Holcomb’s opinion about the quality of the targets and the possibility of some sort of weather-related phenomenon would be the important one. In fact, Holcomb was getting the current meteorological data from the Washington National Weather Station as the UFOs were dancing across the scopes. The weather station personnel indicated that there was a slight temperature inversion over Washington, but Holcomb, based on the meteorologists’ observations, didn’t believe it was strong enough to cause the problems, and the targets. Holcomb later said it did not explain all the good solid returns (Ruppelt, 1956). As the expert on the scene, his opinion was an important one.

Dewey Fournet

Holcomb, or Fournet, it was never clear, telephoned the analysis to Newcastle AFB in Delaware, where the fighters were based. Again, the F-94s were scrambled, and on arrival, were vectored toward the various targets, which were now weaker. The pilots didn't see anything except for an object identified as an aircraft and a hovering white light that disappeared when fighters approached.

With those men watching, as well as the controllers at various facilities using various radars, the F-94s arrived. And the UFOs vanished from the scopes immediately. The jets were vectored to the last known position of the UFOs, but even though visibility was unrestricted in the area, the pilots could see nothing. The fighters made a systematic search of the area, but since they could find nothing out of the ordinary, because the targets on the radars had all disappeared, and with fuel running out, the fighters returned to their base. Their time over the target, giving the fact they had to travel from Dover, Delaware, and return to that base, was limited.

Later, Air Force officers would learn that as the fighters appeared over Washington, people in the area of Langley Air Force Base, Virginia, spotted weird lights in the sky. Ruppelt (1956) reported, "...people in the area around Langley AFB... began to call Langley Tower to report that they were looking at weird lights that were 'rotating and giving off alternating colors.' A few minutes after the calls began to come in, the tower operators themselves saw the same or a similar light and they called for an interceptor."

An F-94, in the area on a routine mission was diverted to search for the light. The pilot saw it and turned toward it, but it disappeared "like somebody turning off a light bulb Ruppelt, 1956)." The pilot continued the intercept and did get a radar lock on the now unlighted and virtually

invisible target. The radar lock was broken by the object as it sped away. The fighter continued the pursuit, obtaining two more radar locks on the object, but each time the locks were broken. This, of course, is another example of multiple radar returns, accompanied by a visual sighting and importantly, there is no weather phenomenon that would account for this.

In the Newport News, Virginia area, not that far from Langley AFB, people were also seeing lights in the sky. William W. Parkinson, Jr. was standing on the roof of the *Daily Press* building when he saw a bright, rotating object that flashed silver, red and green lights. It hovered, according to Parkinson, over the James River Bridge for nearly thirty minutes and then drifted over a ball park to the east. Gradually it rose to about five thousand feet and was in sight for two hours and fifteen minutes. Almost two dozen people called the newspaper to report seeing the UFO.

At 1:45 a.m., the Langley Tower operators sighted a bluish object that they said resembled a lighted cotton ball. They thought it was about ten miles from the tower and to the west. It climbed straight up, to about five thousand feet and disappeared. They only saw it for five or six seconds. Although the color suggested it was a star, the action suggested something else.

The scene then shifted back to Washington National. Again, the Air Defense Command was alerted and, for a second time that night, jet fighters were scrambled. This time the pilots were able to see the objects, vectored toward them by the air traffic controllers. But the fighters couldn't close on the lights. The pilots saw no external details behind the glow, and saw nothing strange, other than lights where the radar suggested that something strange should be seen.

After several minutes of failure to close on a target, one of the lights was spotted lopping along alone. A fighter piloted by Lieutenant William Patterson turned as he kicked in the afterburner and tried to catch the object. It disappeared before Patterson could see much of anything other than it was a light.

Interviewed the next day, Patterson said, "I tried to make contact with the bogies below one thousand feet, but they [the controllers] vectored us around. I saw several bright lights. I was at my maximum speed, but

even then, I had no closing speed.

The Cedar Rapids Gazette

CITY FINAL

SAUCERS SWARM OVER CAPITAL

'Dwyer in Citizenship Tale Denial

C.R. Sewer Project Gets Green Light

Another Gold Medal Winner

NEW RECORD

COST OF LIVING

FAIR DEAL

NO NO, LOWSTIE FLAK WE DIDN'T WIN THAT ONE

Call Voiced In Iran To Oust Yanks

Three Quake Sequels Jolt Californians

Radar Picks Up Scores in Early Hour

Plane Sent to Area Washington Object Finds Nothing.

A science fiction-like headline about the sightings in Washington, D.C.

I ceased chasing them because I saw no chance of overtaking them. I was vectored into new objects. Later I chased a single bright light which I estimated about ten miles away. I lost visual contact with it... (Ruppelt, 1956)."

Chop said told me that he, along with the others in the radar room, watched the intercept on the radar scope. What the pilot was telling them about the ongoing intercept, they all could see playing out on the radar (Interview, 1995a).

Fournet had mentioned an intercept that he said had gotten a “little gory,” but he would go no further in his description (Interview 1995b). I don’t know if he was worried about violating military regulations, even at that late date, or he believed it was something that shouldn’t be discussed. I asked Chop about it and he provided a different perspective. What Chop told me sounded like the Patterson intercept. Chop said that there was a cluster of blips, “five or six of them and suddenly he [the interceptor pilot] reports that he sees some lights. He was asked to describe the lights and he said they are very brilliant blue-white. And he was going to close in to get a better look at them, which he did. We could see on the radar scope; we knew where he was and they appeared… he flew into the area where they were clustered and he reported they were all around him (Interview, 1995a).”

Patterson finally had to break off the intercept, though there were still lights in the sky and objects on the scope. According to Chop, the pilot

radioed that he was running low on fuel. He turned so that he could head back to his base to refuel.

Chop said that the last of the objects disappeared from the scope about the time the sun came up. He said, “They stayed [under] observation on our radar scope until dawn, about five or six o’clock [that morning]. When it got light, they just gradually disappeared (Interview, 1995a).”

There might have been another reason for Fournet’s reluctance to talk about that night. Members of the Houston MUFON section interviewed a pilot who had been involved in some of the intercepts that night. Norman Sykes said that in 1952 he was based at Dover and on July 26, he had been one of the pilots assigned to the alert crew. He said:

> I was one of the two that got scrambled… We lifted off out of Dover, Delaware, and were vectored toward Washington… This evening we were told we would be descending to the order of 10,000 foot or maybe below. I knew something was very unusual… This night the voice inflections of the voice instructions we received were of excitement. I knew something was strange. I didn’t believe that a Soviet turboprop Bear bomber [Bear was the NATO designation for the Soviet Tupolev TU-95] was in the area or anything of that sort because more havoc would have broken loose.
>
> The way this intercept works is that you have ground radar, the Air Force operation unit that vectors the pilot into the area of the target. At that point my radar operator, being one of the two members on board of this small jet interceptor, takes over and tries to pick up on his radarscope the target… This night, however, we quickly figured out that we were not going to catch or get near this object… We tried very hard. We gave it our best shot with everything that little airplane had… But the object we were trying to catch was too evasive. It moved at times above supersonic speeds and other times very slowly. The change of direction was so quickly, so erratic that there was no way an aircraft, a manned aircraft could stay with it…
>
> My radar operator said that he saw a couple of passed on his scope that [this] was a high-speed object… One time it was supersonic… So, it didn’t take but a few minutes. That was all we did that night. The object disappeared (Interview, 1995c).

Sykes personal logbook showed that after the attempted intercepts, he refueled at Langley. He then returned to Dover. The total flight time that night was about three and a half hours.

That wasn't the end of it, however. The next day, Sykes was interviewed by high ranking officers. He said he was taken to one room and his radar officer taken to another for the interrogation. It was an intense questioning about the events of the night before, and he said that they had threatened him with court martial. They told him not to tell anyone what he had seen or done.

Blue Book's Ed Ruppelt later quizzed Fournet about the activities that night. According to Ruppelt (1996), Fournet and Holcomb were convinced the targets were solid, metallic objects and not the fuzzy images produced by temperature inversion. Fournet told Ruppelt that there were weather related targets on the scopes, but all the controllers were ignoring them. Those watching the scopes, as well as Holcomb, could tell the difference between the weather-related targets caused by the inversion layers and those they believed to be solid. Everyone was convinced that the targets were real, solid objects and not ghost images.

The situation was a repeat of the week before. Headlines around the world on Tuesday, July 29, told the whole story. In a banner headline that could have come from a science fiction movie, *The Cedar Rapids Gazette* reported, "Saucers Swarm over Capital."

The problem, however, is that no one was sure what had happened during the night. Both Fournet and Chop, interviewed years later, both told me, said that the returns were solid, not weather related, and that the objects seemed to react to the appearance of the jet interceptors. Like the radar operators, and the Navy expert, Holcomb, both thought they were looking at real objects and not echoes or refracted returns.

When the night ended, that chapter also ended. While UFOs were still being reported from all over the United States, the real interest was centered on Washington, and those in the Air Force realized it. The consensus seemed to be that UFOs over almost anywhere in the United States was interesting, but UFOs over Washington, D.C. were frightening. The Air Force realized that these particular sightings had to be explained as quickly as possible. The result was the largest military press conference to be held since the conclusion of the Second World War.

At 4:00 p.m. on July 29, Major General John A. Samford, Chief of Air Intelligence, accompanied by Major General Roger Ramey, he of the Roswell balloon explanation fame, held the press conference at the Pentagon. Of that press conference, Ruppelt (1956) wrote:

> General Samford made an honest attempt to straighten out the Washington National Sightings, but the cards were stacked against him. He had to hedge on many answers to questions from the press because he didn't know the answers. This hedging gave the impression that he was trying to cover up something more than just the fact his people fouled up in not fully investigating the sightings. Then he brought in Captain Roy James from ATIC to handle all the queries about radar. James didn't do any better because he had just arrived in Washington that morning and didn't know very much more about the sightings than he'd read in the papers. Major Dewey Fournet and Lieutenant Holcomb, who had been at the airport during the sightings, were extremely conspicuous by their absence…

From that point on, however, it seems that there was an explanation offered for the Washington National Sightings. Samford, during the conference, backed up by his radar expert, James, suggested that there was a temperature inversion over Washington on the nights of the radar sightings. That became the explanation, shouted by the newspapers that evening.

The truth is that the temperature inversion explanation simply doesn't work, especially when it is remembered that there were both radar and visual observations, many times of the same thing. But this made those in charge happy and the news media had an answer so that the sightings could be ignored.

Fournet told me (1995b), "When you combine radar reports with Holcomb's explanations to me about solid returns with the reports of pilots, I think you can conclude they were not reflections from the atmosphere or temperature inversions."

Fournet believed the Condon Committee investigation into the Washington Nationals was a whitewash. They hadn't contacted him for an interview. He said, "My opinion was the way they went about it was absurd. It amounted to a whitewash, in my opinion (1995b)."

While it is true that many of the sightings that were reported in July 1952 have explanations attached to them, there is a great deal of

information available in the Blue Book files that suggest otherwise. An examination of those files that include documentation, witness statements from airline pilots and military officers, and even the complete transcript of Samford's press conference, provides a different perspective on the Washington Nationals case. It is not easy to dismiss the radar data or the pilots' observations with a simple temperature inversion. There is too much data that argues against it, all of it available in the Blue Book files. Because of that information and the often-candid statements by those involved, including those who spoke with me, the Washington Nationals are among the best cases found in the Project Blue Book files.

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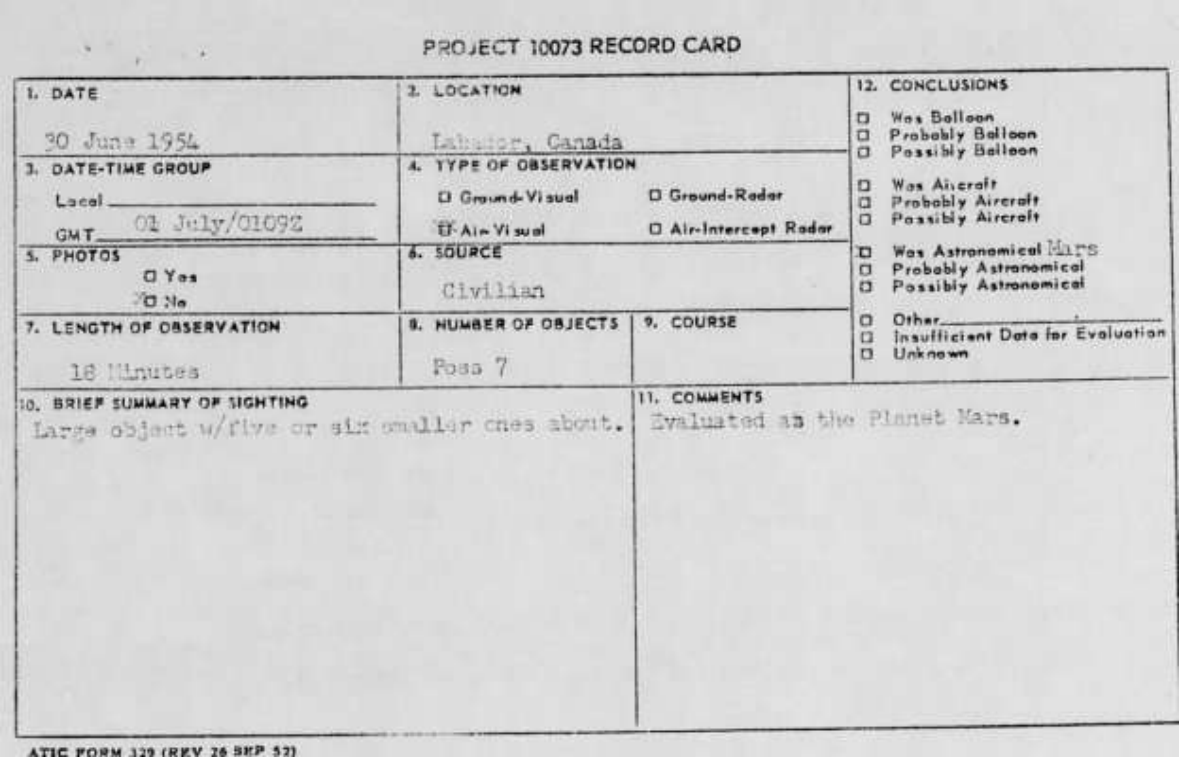
Chapter 7: June 30, 1954



PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD

1. DATE: 30 June 1954	2. LOCATION: Labador, Canada	12. CONCLUSIONS ☐ Was Balloon ☐ Probably Balloon ☐ Possibly Balloon ☐ Was Aircraft ☐ Probably Aircraft ☐ Possibly Aircraft ☐ Was Astronomical Mars ☐ Probably Astronomical ☐ Possibly Astronomical ☐ Other ☐ Insufficient Data for Evaluation ☐ Unknown
3. DATE-TIME GROUP Local GMT 01 July/0109Z	4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION ☐ Ground-Visual ☐ Ground-Radar ☒ Air-Visual ☐ Air-Intercept Radar	
5. PHOTOS ☐ Yes ☒ No	6. SOURCE: Civilian	
7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION: 10 Minutes	8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS: Poss 7	9. COURSE
10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING: Large object w/five or six smaller ones about.	11. COMMENTS: Evaluated as the Planet Mars.	

ATIC FORM 329 (REV 26 SEP 52)

Project Blue Book Project Card.

There are some cases in the Blue Book files that create problems for UFO researchers. That is, a solution has been offered, but it is a solution that doesn't seem to fit all the facts. Such is the report made by an airline pilot and members of his flight crew on June 30, 1954.

Captain James R. Howard, a pilot for British Overseas Airways Corporation (BOAC), and who had crossed the Atlantic 250 times, spotted something that he could not identify. According to his statement as published:

> I was in command of a BOAC Boeing Strato cruiser en route from New York to London via Goose Bay Labrador (refueling stop). Soon after crossing overhead Seven Islands at 19,000 feet, True Airspeed 230 kts, both my co-pilot and I became aware of something moving along off our port beam at a lower altitude at a distance of maybe five miles, in and out of a broken layer of Strato Cumulus cloud. As we watched, these objects climbed above the cloud and we could now clearly see one large and six small. As we

flew on towards Goose Bay the large object began to change shape and the smaller to move relative to the larger…

We informed Goose Bay that we had something odd in sight and they made arrangements to vector a fighter (F94?) on to us. Later I changed radio frequency to contact this fighter; the pilot told me he had me in sight on radar closing me head-on at 20 miles. At that the small objects seemed to enter the larger, and then the big one shrank. I gave descriptions of this to the fighter and a bearing of the objects from me. I then had to change back to Goose frequency for descent clearance. I don't know if the fighter saw anything as he hadn't landed when I left Goose for London (Gillmor, 1969, p. 139).

Jenny Randles (1987), writing in *The UFO Conspiracy*, expanding on this, mentioned that Lee Boyd, the first officer, alerted Goose Bay that there was an unidentified object escorting them. Goose Bay told them that an interceptor would be launched with the call sign of Pinto One.

BOAC Aircraft.

Although the BOAC crew never saw the interceptor, and the radar on the fighter never painted the object, the BOAC crew were told that the radar at Goose Bay did see it. That would, of course, eliminate some sort of natural phenomenon given the observations of the flight crew. It also

provided a bit of instrumentality for the sighting, something that was outside the problems of human perception.

According to Randles, when the aircraft landed at Goose Bay at 1:51 a.m., the crew was met by both US Air Force and Canadian officials that included intelligence officers. Both pilots, Howard and Boyd, were taken away to be debriefed. The navigator H. McDonnell, said that the flight logs were taken by the Air Force and that he was questioned about their airspeed and direction. His interrogation didn't last very long. He said the pilots were gone much longer.

That wasn't the end of it. Once they reached London, the pilots were ordered to the Air Ministry. The explanation offered then for the sighting was that the crew and some of the passengers had seen a solar eclipse. The trouble was that the eclipse had not begun when the sighting was made.

Howard, in a report in the *New York Times* (1954) said that the objects resembled "a large burst of flak and six smaller blobs." He had refined the description in other reports, saying that the UFO was opaque, dark and jelly-fish-like. He also said that all but one of the crew and many of the passengers had seen the object. In one newspaper article, Howard said, "sometimes it was wedge shape, sometimes like a dumbbell, sometimes like a sphere with tail-like projections. The six smaller objects dodged about, either in front or behind (Project Blue Book; Associated Press, 1954)."

McDonnell met up with Howard some months later. He asked Howard what had happened at the Air Ministry. Howard responded, "Sorry. I can't say. You know the score."

Howard, his crew and passengers, however, were not alone spotting the strange object. According to the Blue Book file, more information came from a ship, *USS Edisto*, in the area. They described the same thing. The ship's crew identified the object as Mars and suggested that there were "mirage conditions" on that date which could have influenced the sighting from the air.

The file confirmed the attempted intercept. The fighter pilot, who wasn't identified by name, said that no intercept was made. He also said that he did not make radar contract with the unidentified object.

The file also contained a message that had been sent to various commands. It said, "NEAC evaluates sighting as unknown natural

phenomena cma (comma) possibly a mirage as a temperature inversion in referenced area made this condition possible pd (period) (Blue Book)."

The Blue Book file also provided some additional information. Howard estimated that they watched the objects for about eighteen minutes. Eleven other crew members verified the information. One of the messages ended with "No further information available. Duty officer regards as improbable threat to US (Blue Book)."

Given this lack of information, this certainly not one of Blue Book's best cases. The explanation seems to be clear, and while some might reject that explanation because it came from the Air Force, it is based on observations made at the time by another set of witnesses. There seems to be no reason to reject their solution.

The Condon Committee, however, thought the case deserved more attention. That might be explained by their interest in weather related phenomena that could cause UFO sightings. In a chapter called, "Optical and Radar Analysis of the field Case," it was noted, "Very little meteorological data are available for this field Case," it was noted, "Very little meteorological data are available for this part of the world on the date in question, so that the presence of significant optical propagation mechanisms can be neither confirmed nor ruled out. This sighting was examined because of the 'Mirage' explanation. In fact, the author noted, "Nevertheless, certain facts in the case are strongly suggestive of an optical mirage phenomenon (Gillmor, 1969)."

The Condon scientists went on to explain that the mirage might have been caused by a reflection from over the horizon. This is called superior mirage and has been reported often over the ocean. They then qualified that by writing:

> The principal difficultly with this explanation, besides having to hypothesize the existence of the mirage-producing layer, is how to account for the anisotrophy [being directionally dependent] of the mirage. Anisotrophy of this sort, i.e. a mirage limited to certain viewing azimuths, is common in earthbound mirages when viewed from a single location. But a mirage layer through which a reflected image could be seen only in one, constant principal direction (plus a view smaller "satellite" images over a distance of 85 n. mil [nautical miles] is quite unusual (Gillmor, 1969).

What this says is that the Air Force was happy with the mirage answer, and with the suggestion that Mars was the culprit. And it says that the Condon Committee, looking at cases in which some sort of weather phenomenon is suspected, ended up not agreeing with the Air Force.

AND SUN, THURSDAY, JULY 1, 1954.

'Flying Jellyfish' Tailed Plane, Crewmen Report

By the Associated Press.

LONDON, July 1.—The crew of a British airliner reported the plane was followed last night for 80 miles by seven weird flying black objects near Goose Ba, Labrador.

Capt. James Howard, pilot of the New York-to-London airliner, said the mysterious escort vanished when a U.S. Air Froce fighter plane came up to investigate.

The British Overseas Airways Corp. (BOAC) stratocruiser was at 19,000 feet about 150 miles southwest of Goose Bay when the objects appeared.

"They flashed into sight suddenly and obviously were not aircraft as we know them," Capt. Howard said. "All appeared black, and I will swear they were solid. They might have been five miles away. They stayed with us 18 minutes.

"There was a big central object which appeared to keep changing shape—'flying jellyfish', we dubbed it.

"Sometimes it was wedge-shaped, sometimes like a dumbbell, sometimes like a sphere with a tail-like projections. The six smaller objects dodged about, either in front or behind.

All 10 members of the crew agreed with his description, as did those of the 51 passengers who were awake at the time of sighting.

Newspaper article about the sighting.

They added that there was a "slim possibility" that the aircraft itself was responsible for the "image layer through intensification (by

compression induced by the shock wave of the aircraft's passage through the air) of a barely subcritical layer, i.e. one in which the temperature gradient is just a little bit less than the value required to produce a mirage (Gillmor, 1969)."

But none of this is really all that important. It is the final conclusion, published in the Condon Committee's final report which says, "This unusual sighting should therefore be assigned to the category of some almost certainly natural phenomenon, which is so rare that it apparently has never been reported before or since."

Or, in other words, they had no real explanation for it but believed it to be natural, but they didn't know what that would be. They just refused to say that they had failed to identify the source of the sighting which would have been the honest thing to do. After all, they didn't identify it.

And that last paragraph from the Condon Committee report on the sighting is what demanded its inclusion here. It gives an insight into the mission of the Condon Committee, and it provides a look at the Air Force investigation. True, the Air Force relied on the observations of the crew of a ship in the region, but that doesn't seem to be unreasonable. Had the "mirage, Mars" answer been left intact, that would be a reasonable conclusion. Since it was taken a step further, there is no reasonable conclusion. It is "Unidentified."

Sources:

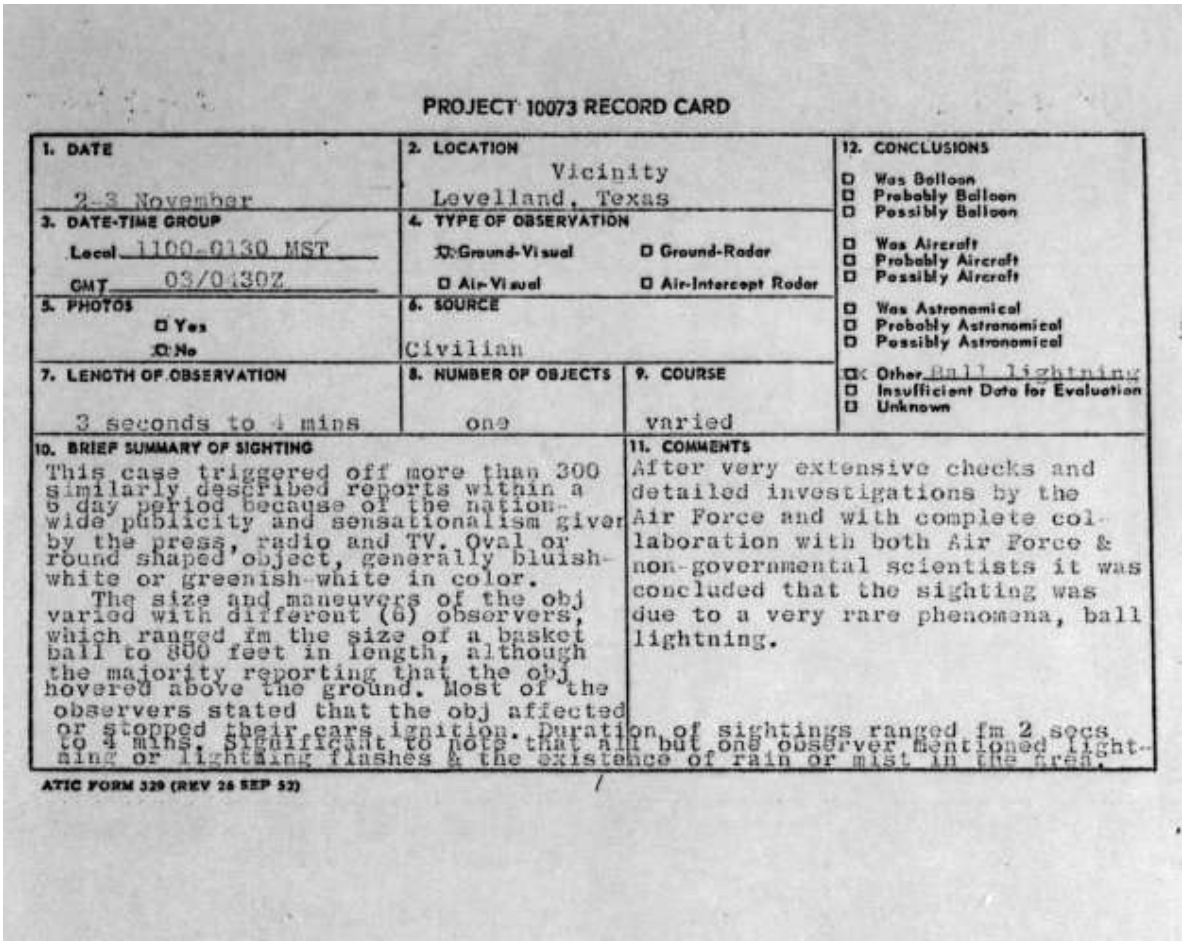
"'Flying Jelly' Tailed Plane Crewmen Report." *Associate Press*. July 1, 1954.

"Mystery Objects Follow Air Liner." *The New York Times*. July 1, 1954

Project Blue Book files, Roll No. 21.

Randles, Jenny. *UFO Conspiracy: The First Forty Years*. London: Javelin Books, 1987: pp. 46 – 49.

Chapter 8: Levelland, Texas, November 2, 1957



PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD

1. DATE: 2-3 November	2. LOCATION: Vicinity Levelland, Texas	12. CONCLUSIONS: ☐ Was Balloon ☐ Probably Balloon ☐ Possibly Balloon ☐ Was Aircraft ☐ Probably Aircraft ☐ Possibly Aircraft ☐ Was Astronomical ☐ Probably Astronomical ☐ Possibly Astronomical ☒ Other Ball lightning ☐ Insufficient Data for Evaluation ☐ Unknown
3. DATE-TIME GROUP: Local 1100-0130 MST; GMT 03/0430Z	4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION: ☒ Ground-Visual ☐ Ground-Radar ☐ Air-Visual ☐ Air-Intercept Radar	
5. PHOTOS: ☐ Yes ☒ No	6. SOURCE: Civilian	
7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION: 3 seconds to 4 mins	8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS: one	9. COURSE: varied

10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING

This case triggered off more than 300 similarly described reports within a 5 day period because of the nation-wide publicity and sensationalism given by the press, radio and TV. Oval or round shaped object, generally bluish-white or greenish-white in color.

The size and maneuvers of the obj varied with different (6) observers, which ranged fm the size of a basket ball to 800 feet in length, although the majority reporting that the obj hovered above the ground. Most of the observers stated that the obj affected or stopped their cars ignition. Duration of sightings ranged fm 2 secs to 4 mins. Significant to note that all but one observer mentioned lightning or lightning flashes & the existence of rain or mist in the area.

11. COMMENTS

After very extensive checks and detailed investigations by the Air Force and with complete collaboration with both Air Force & non-governmental scientists it was concluded that the sighting was due to a very rare phenomena, ball lightning.

ATIC FORM 329 (REV 26 SEP 52)

Project Blue Book Project card.

A legitimate question is why the Condon Committee, that University of Colorado study of UFOs financed by the Air Force, never bothered looking in depth into the Levelland UFO sightings of November 1957. In their final report there is a single mention of Levelland in which they claim, “Magnetic mapping of automobiles involved in particularly puzzling UFO reports of past years, such as the November 1957 incidents in Levelland, Texas, would have been most desirable, but the cars were no longer available (Gillmor, 1969).”

Magnetic mapping is an interesting idea and the scientists working with Condon had pointed out that the manufacture of the cars’ steel components such as hoods and doors would have created a magnetic

signature that could be studied. Even if the cars involved in the incidents had not been mapped prior to the sighting, those manufactured at the same time, at the same place, would have a magnetic signature that closely resembled those from the UFO event. It would be like using DNA of a relative to find a specific individual. It meant that the magnetic signature of all the cars were similar and any major deviation would have been significant.

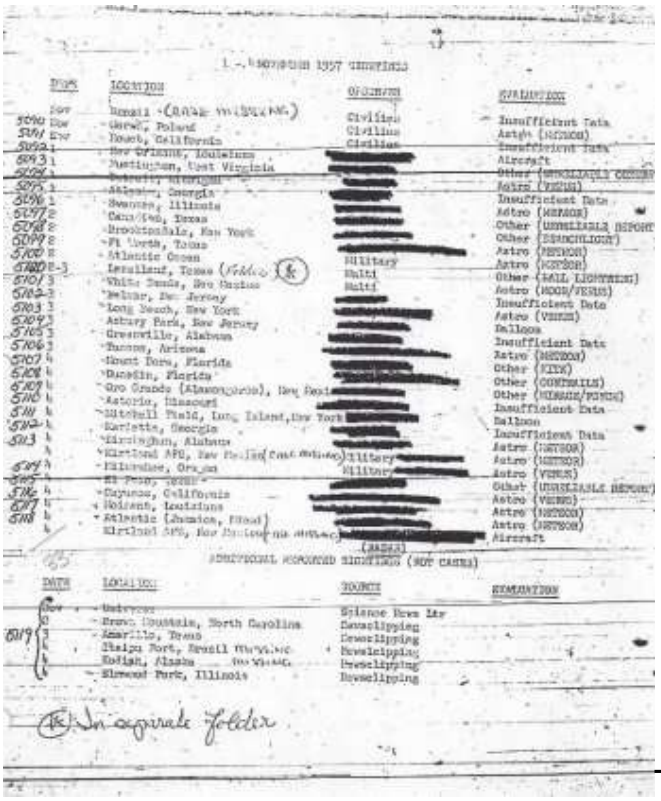
They did follow up on this, after a fashion. They reported that two of their investigators, Fred Hooven and David Moyer (actually part of the Ford Motor Company) investigated a case reported to the Condon Committee (Case No. 12 in the official report) from the winter of 1967, in which a woman said that a lighted UFO hovered over her car for several miles and that it interfered with the electrical functions of her car. Hooven and Moyer said that an examination of the car some two months later found all the electrical systems working as they should and that they discovered no magnetic anomalies when the magnetically mapped automobile was compared to cars manufactured at the same time and in the same place.

This seems to indicated that a real effort was made to investigate the case including extensive examination of the car by Ford engineers. What they found was a car in poor repair with a radio antenna that was broken so that it only picked up the local stations, a fan belt that was loose so that it was not charging properly, that the speedometer had been broken, repaired and apparently broken again so that there were speed fluctuations on the dashboard display and that oil gauge was malfunctioning because of leakage in the electrical system (Gillmor, 1969). In other words, it seemed that everything the witness had reported about car trouble was related to the car itself and not some sort of outside influence such as the hovering UFO.

They, that is Hooven and Moyer, reported that the witness seemed to be a nice woman who was not prone to hysteria and who was competent, meaning that she was intelligent and wasn't mentally ill in some way. However, they noted that her memories of the UFO incident were not without problems including that she remembered a bright, full moon when it was actually in its last quarter and that though she claimed to have seen the UFO in her rearview mirror, the configuration of the car and the placement of the mirror meant that the UFO couldn't have been seen in the way she described.

There was a second case (No. 39) from the fall of 1967 and in a location noted as the South Pacific, that had somewhat similar results. Again, the Condon Committee doesn't supply the name of the witness, only that he was a businessman who said that his car had been stopped by a UFO sometime between 3:30 and 4:00 a.m. The lights failed and the radio went dead. He also reported that he felt something pressing down on his head and shoulders.

Project Blue Book Index showing the long list of sightings made in early November, 1957.



Through a break in the fog, he saw a UFO that passed over his car and stopped, hovering above the highway. He thought it was about thirty feet in diameter, red-orange, saucer shaped but with a fuzzy outline. It had rotating lights and wobbled as it moved and hovered about 160 feet above the ground. He watched it for about a minute and a half, before it took off into the fog. When it was gone the radio came back on, the lights brightened and he was able to start his car. An important point here, and one that needs to be recognized is that he had to take an action. The car did not spontaneously restart (Gillmor, 1969).

Once he had started the car, he drove to the nearest town in search of someone to talk to. He didn't find any additional witnesses. Eventually the case made its way to NICAP. That investigation showed that the car's

clock had stopped at 3:46 a.m. and, according to the unnamed witness, the clock had been working perfectly prior to the sighting. Interestingly, they found that stereo tapes that had been in the car at the time of the sighting had lost some of their fidelity, especially in the lower ranges and that the rear window had some sort of distortion in the glass (Gillmor, 1969).

The Condon Committee investigation was carried out by Roy Craig, who recorded the interviews with the witness and gathered additional details. In this case they found a car of similar manufacture and engaged in a magnetic mapping of the hoods of both. There were a couple of points where the magnetic signature differed significantly but for the most part, the magnetic signatures of the two cars were similar.

One interesting point is that Craig reported that the radio's FM band no longer worked, though, according to the witness, it had been fine until the sighting. Five days after the sighting all that could be heard was a loud hum across the whole FM spectrum.

And, now, according to the witness, he was no long certain that the clock had been working in the days prior to the sighting. The clock stoppage might not have been relevant.

Craig was bothered by the witness' vague description of the object and with the inconsistencies in his estimates of the size and distance as they were determined later by measurement. He was also worried that no one else had seen the object and that according to Craig "…car body did not show evidence of exposure to strong magnetic fields, a more detailed investigation of this event as a source related to electro-magnetic effect on automobiles did not seem warranted."

These were the only cases of reported electromagnetic effects stalling cars though the Condon Committee investigators were aware of the Levelland case. Levelland differed from those they did investigate because it had multiple, independent witnesses and included law enforcement officers among those who had seen the object or the light. In fact, there were later reports of a possible landing trace, and a suggestion of Air Force attempts to suppress information.

The papers, documents, research, rough drafts and other material collected during the Condon Colorado project were eventually sent to the American Philosophical Society Library. It turns out that they did make a study of the Levelland case though it seemed to have been based solely

on the Project Blue Book files, what NICAP reported, and what was reported in *Dallas Times Herald* newspaper.

There seemed to have been no original research conducted, meaning no one with the Condon Committee interviewed any of the Levelland witnesses but did note that the vehicles involved in Levelland couldn't be located ten years after the fact. Their research amounted to a synopsis of the sources quoted, a short discussion on areas of further investigation that was related to weather phenomena, especially ball lightning, none of which made it into the final report.

At the end of the Condon Levelland report, there was a series of hypotheses suggesting solutions. This seems to have been taken almost directly from an Air Force document about the case. They simply did not bother to follow up on this case, though they noted its importance. There were multiple witnesses to the suppression of the electrical systems made independently and there were multiple witnesses who reported an actual, physical object either close to the ground or sitting on the ground.

Prior to the sightings in and around Levelland, there were others that might have been related, though no electro-magnetic effects (EM) were reported. At 8:00 p.m., on November 2, 1957, in Clovis, New Mexico, KCLV station owner, Odis Echols, watched as glowing object flying to the southeast. Minutes later, the Ground Observer Corps in Midland, Texas, logged a large, bluish object flying to the west. And at 11:20 p.m. Calvin Harris and Sandy McKean, in the tower at the Amarillo Airport saw a bluish object fly by. (*UFO Investigator* January 1958 p. 3)

The Levelland sightings began on the night of November 2, 1957. People living and visiting the panhandle area of Texas, near the small town of Levelland, saw a strange glowing object that knocked out power, stalled cars, and may have launched a wave of UFO sightings.

The first people to see the object were two farmers working fields in the early evening near Petit, Texas, not all that far from Levelland. Both the grain combines used by the men, each with two engines, failed as a glowing object passed overhead. When it disappeared, they were able to restart the engine and the equipment began to function properly. The farmers didn't get a good look at the UFO, but they did see it and they did report it to the authorities (Burleson, 2003; Rodeghier, 1981).

At 8:30 that evening, a single witness traveling between Seminole and Seagraves, Texas, southwest of Levelland, spotted a light on the highway ahead. As he drove closer, both his engine and headlights

failed. A few seconds later, the light rose silently into the sky and his car began to operate properly (Rodeghier, 1981; Schopick).

Neither of these cases were part of the Blue Book system and weren't reported directly to the Air Force. Each, however, came from witnesses who were in the general vicinity of Levelland on the evening of November 2. Because these witnesses did not report their sightings to the Air Force, the Air Force attitude was that the sightings had not taken place and were therefore irrelevant.

Site of the Pedro Saucido encounter as it looks today.

The first of the cases reported directly to Levelland police and which became part of the Blue Book files was made by Pedro Saucido [or Saucedo, or even Siado, depending on the source], who, with Joe Salaz [or Palav, Palaz, Salav or Salvaz, depending on the source], saw a glowing object sweep across the highway in front of his truck. As it landed near them with what Saucido described as a roar like a clap of thunder, the truck's headlights died and the engine failed. Saucido dived out the truck door and rolled under his truck, out of the way. Salaz sat terror-stricken in the passenger's seat, his eyes glued to the object and unable to move (Burleson, 2003; Randle, 2000; Rodeghier, 1981; Steiger 1976).

City limits of Levelland, Texas.

The blue-green glow of the UFO shifted into a red so bright that Salaz could no longer look directly at it. There seemed to be noise coming from inside the craft. There was a series of blinking lights on the craft flashing on and off every three seconds. It sat on the ground for about three minutes and then, still glowing bright red, it shot suddenly into the sky.

Saucido crawled from under his truck, and now that the UFO was gone, both the lights and engine began to work again. Afraid that he would run into the object if he continued to Levelland, he drove to another town to call the Levelland police. A deputy sheriff identified by some as A. J. Fowler (and also identified as a police officer rather than a deputy) listened to his report but laughed it off as just another flying saucer story, ignoring the obvious distress of the witness. Or, Fowler believed Saucido was drunk and that too, meant Fowler paid no attention to the witness (Burleson, 2003).

Saucido reported to have said that the UFO had streaked right overhead. “It sounded like thunder, and my truck rocked from the blast. I felt a lot of heat (Blue Book).”

A few days after the sightings the lone Air Force investigator on the case, Staff Sergeant Norman P. Barth of the 1006th Air Intelligence Service Squadron, stationed at Reese Air Force Base in Lubbock, made a short trip into Levelland to interview Saucido, among the few others that the Air Force had identified. Barth gave Saucido a low reliability as a witness. Barth wrote, "SOURCE

Smyer, Texas, as it looks today.

[Saucido] appeared to be [deleted by Air Force officers]. He stated his occupation was a barber; however, Sheriff Clem... stated that SOURCE was a part-time farm laborer, dishwasher, barber, etc. SOURCE had no concept of direction and was conflicting in his answers (Blue Book)."

However, others such as Charles Maney and Richard Hall (1961), in *The Challenge of Unidentified Flying Objects*, described Saucido as a combat veteran of the Korean War. Donald Menzel and Lyle Boyd (1963), in their *The World of Flying Saucers* also mention that Saucido was a veteran of the Korean War. The benefit of the doubt should go to a veteran, especially when most of the negative comments came from the Air Force investigator who might be prejudiced against anyone who claims to have seen a flying saucer. There have also been negative comments made because Saucido's name is close to saucer and some saw some sort of conspiracy there or attempt at personal publicity.

Near Shallowater, Texas, two married couples saw a flash of light in the southwestern sky. The radio in their car faded and the headlights dimmed while they watched the light. The couples reported that there were no thunderstorms around them at the time, though a distant thunderstorm might account for their report of radio static. Their sighting was reported to various UFO organizations (Rodeghier, 1981; Blue Book).

About an hour later, just after midnight on November 3, Jim Wheeler saw the red glowing object sitting on the road. As he approached it, his car engine died and his lights went out. The egg-shaped object then

lifted off swiftly and silently. As it disappeared, Wheeler's car engine started again though it is not clear if he took any action to start it. The lights came back on as the object disappeared. He, too, called the Levelland police to report what he had seen (Burleson, 2003; Rodeghier 1981; Blue Book).

Almost as they hung up the telephone from talking with Wheeler, Jose Alverez near Whitharral called to report that he had seen the egg-shaped object that killed his car's engine (Rodeghier, 1981). And, a few minutes later, Frank Williams walked into the police station to report the same sort of thing (Burleson, 2003).

About the same time, Newell Wright was near Smyer, which is about ten miles from Levelland when his car died suddenly. Wright said:

> I was driving home from Lubbock on state highway 116 at approximately 12:00 p.m. when the ammeter on my car jumped to complete discharge, then it returned to normal and my motor started cutting out like it was out of gas. After it had quit running, my lights went out. I got out of my car and tried in vain to find the trouble… It was at this time that I saw the object, I got back into my car and tried to start it, but to no available. After that I did nothing but stare at this object until it disappeared about 5 minutes later. I then resumed trying to start my car and succeed with no more trouble than under normal circumstances (Blue Book).

The only problem with this sighting is that Wright didn't make his report until the next day. By that time, the news media was alerted and reports of the sightings had been published in newspapers and broadcast on the radio. It could be said that Wright got his idea by what he had read in the newspaper or heard on the radio, though there is no evidence that the media influenced him at all.

Of course, it could also be pointed out that Wright, learning of other reports, added his to the mix. He might not have thought about calling the sheriff until after he learned others had made similar reports to Clem. Or, it might be suggested that he had thought no one would believe him until he learned that others had seen the same thing.

The initial reaction of law enforcement in Levelland was that someone was playing some sort of an elaborate joke. No one there believed that a glowing red egg, or a bluish-green oval was terrorizing the populace. Besides, according to the Air Force, the weather was poor, with mist and drizzle and there had been thunderstorms in the vicinity, off and on, all

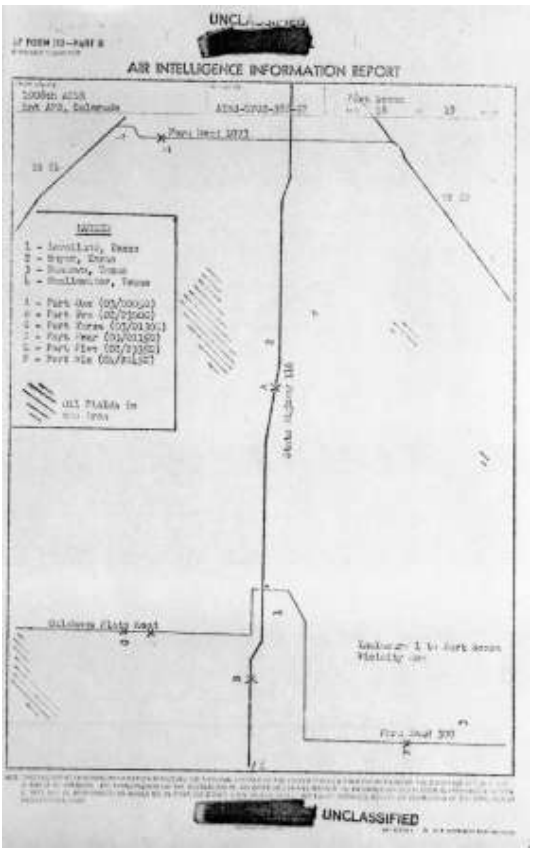
evening (Blue Book). The Air Force would later seem to believe that these facts were important and use them to provide an explanation for the sightings.

As the police officers discussed it, and tried to laugh it off, Jesse (also identified as James) Long called to report that he was driving on a country road northwest of Levelland when he came upon a landed, bright red craft. His truck engine died and his lights went out. Unlike the others, Long got out of his truck and started to walk toward the object. Before he could get too close, the UFO took off. After it was gone, Long reported that his truck engine started easily, which would become an important fact, meaning that he had no trouble starting the engine (Randle, 1999; Blue Book).

By this point Levelland Sheriff Weir Clem decided that something strange was happening around the town. But he didn't like the idea of chasing lights in the night sky, especially with the weather as bad as it was. Thunderstorms were still in the area and though they had caused some problems earlier, it was no longer raining in town, at least according to the legend (Randle, 1999; Blue Book).

Or maybe the weather wasn’t quite that bad. There seems to be a conflict about that as well. The Air Force report said, “The night was dark with a 400 foot ceiling, a complete overcast, and light drizzle. Heavy thunderstorms had just passed through the area (Blue Book).”

The Levelland *Sun* however, reported, “Weathermen said they could not explain away the sightings. There were no thunderstorms in the area.”



Map created by the Air Force investigator.

James MacDonald, a scientist with a deep interest in UFOs in a prepared statement in *Symposium on Unidentified Flying Objects* wrote he “dug out the weather maps and rainfall data. A large high pressure area was moving southward over the Texas Panhandle, completely antithetical to convective

activity and lightning of any sort... a check of half a dozen stations in the vicinity revealed that there was not even any rain falling during this period no had more than a small amount fallen in the hours earlier that day when a cold front went through.”

Skeptics point out that the best interpretation of the weather is that it was a dark night, there had been rain, and there was a mist in the air. These conditions, they believe, might have been conducive to reports of engines stalling and lights failing. What they don’t explain is why these manifestations were limited to the area around Levelland and limited to the night of November 2 and the morning of November 3. Nor do they explain why the lights would fade and the radios would fill with static.

Highway FM 1490, scene of the Clem and Long sightings.

And the reports for the night weren't finished. Ronald Martin, a college student was nearing Levelland, close to where Saucido had made his sighting. He saw what he thought was a big orange ball of fire about a mile away. As the ball approached and then landed on the highway near him. It covered the pavement and as he neared it, his engine died and his headlights dimmed. The object sat there for about a minute and then climbed out. When it was gone, his engine and lights returned to normal (Burleson, 2003).

Barth, would also evaluate Martin's reliability, writing, "SOURCE [Martin] seemed... to be very sincere about his sighting... SOURCE can be considered reliable (Blue Book)."

About an hour after Martin's sighting, Sheriff Clem decided he would have to investigate. He left the office with Deputy Sheriff Patrick McCullogh and drove the back roads and the highways in the Levelland area. About 1:30, according to the Air Force reports, they saw the glowing UFO in the distance. They couldn't seem to get very close to it.

According to Barth, he found Clem to be "fairly reliable." He wrote, "SOURCE impressed the investigator as being of average intelligence... He was rather pleased with the sudden importance of the county (Blue Book)."

In the interview Clem told Barth that he was out looking for the object that had been reported and while traveling south on Oklahoma Flat Road, at about twenty miles an hour, he saw the streak of light. It had a reddish glow and moved from south to west. Clem thought that it was about 800 feet long and about four hundred yards away.

They were not the only law enforcement officers to see the object. Patrolmen Lee Hargrove and Floyd Gavin, following the sheriff in another car also saw the red streak.

Other researchers later reported that Clem had said he was considerably closer. He described an object that was an oval and red "like a brilliant sunset." He said that it passed over the road about three hundred yards in front of his car.

Dr. Donald Burleson, a man living in Roswell, New Mexico, found the daughter of Sheriff Clem when he, Burleson, was doing some research into the sightings. Burleson reported in the *Roswell Daily Record* in 2002, "Aided by the Chamber of Commerce, we [meaning Burleson and his wife Mollie] were able to find one of the late sheriff's daughters and I interviewed her twice (Burleson, 2003; Burleson, 2002)."

According to Burleson, "She [Ginger (Clem) Sims] described her father having tried to drive close to an airborne object, and having his engine and lights die."

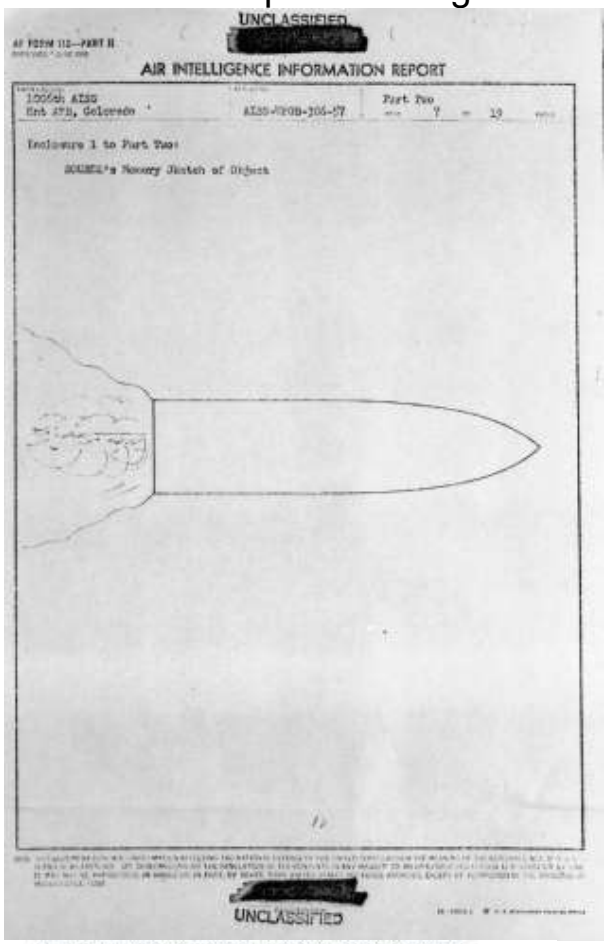
That, of course, put him much closer to the object than had been reported by the Air Force. If he was close enough to the object that it would stall his engine, he was close enough to get a good look at it.

And if Clem was that close, so were the policemen in the car behind. How would the Air Force explain four law enforcement officers confirming the stories that were being told by so many others about their Close Encounters.

Burleson also said that "She said that she remembers his [the sheriff] being called out to a ranch northeast of town to see a ring-shaped spot burned into the ground." The ranch owners had reported the burned area.

Burleson also reported that he interviewed a witness named Carolyn Reno who said that she had been a child living in the area in 1957. She said that her father had taken her out to see a burned spot in the prairie grass that was something over twenty feet in diameter. Burleson said that the description and the location he received independently from Reno matched that given by the sheriff's daughter.

The real question is if Clem was so involved in this in 1957, why didn't he say anything at the time. Again, according to Burleson and to Clem's daughter, "The Air Force visited him after his sighting(s) and advised him to 'drop it' and forget that he had ever seen anything."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AIR INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION REPORT

UNCLASSIFIED

Figure 2 *One witness's illustration of the object*

Skeptics will point out that the records in 1957 showed that Clem was only reported to have seen the object, or lights, in the distance, some 900 feet away and they'll reject, out of hand this new information. It is, after all, from the sheriff's daughter, a second-hand witness, and was told nearly fifty years after the fact. In today's world, it is interesting, but there is no way to verify any of it. Clem's daughter's reports should be noted, but the weight given to these should be fairly light for the reasons cited.

About the same time that Clem was out chasing the bright red light, two highway patrol officers and Constable Lloyd Bollen saw the UFO in the distance. They were unable to get very close to it and reported the same sort of thing as Clem did officially, that is, a red glow in the distance. That meant there were now eight law enforcement officers who

thought they had seen the object. Remember, that was officially. Clem, according to his family had gotten much closer and saw a glowing oval-shaped object.

Some corroboration was provided in 1957. An article published in the *Indianapolis Star* on November 4, seemed to confirm this. According to that article, "'It lit up the whole pavement in front of us for about two seconds,' said Clem. He called it oval shaped and said it looked like a brilliant red sunset."

There is still additional corroboration for Clem's closer approach. In the Blue Book files is most of one of the Air Force forms (ATIC Form No. 164 (13 Oct 54)) about UFOs. At the top, in a handwritten note, it says, "Sheriff's statement given telephonically to Sgt. [illegible] 3 Nov 1957 re this case."

According to that document, the sheriff said that he was within 200 yards of the object, or much closer than has been reported by the Air Force. He said the object was circular, as opposed to a streak of red light in the distance and that it was dark orange. A drawing made, by the NCO taking the statement, verified that it was circular. Inside that drawing it seems to say 50 yards, but the 50 might be crossed out and replaced by 100. That makes it a huge craft.

Remember the important points about this. The newspaper article was published within 48 hours of the initial reports, and it does add some weight to what the daughter told Burleson. Second, there is the Air Force form filled during the telephone interview with Clem. It means that the information supplied by the daughter is not unprecedented. In 1957, the information was available to the Air Force investigators but they chose to ignore it.

Also, in the Levelland area about that time was Ray Jones, the Levelland Fire Marshal. He was searching for an explanation for the many UFO reports that were being made that night. He saw a streak of light not far from him. His lights dimmed and the engine sputtered until the object was gone which suggests he was closer than suggested in the Air Force documentation. And this adds, officially, another law enforcement officer to the mix.

Also, part of the Air Force file on Levelland was a report from a man living in Whiteface, Texas. He told Barth, "While driving north about 7 miles north of Sundown, Texas, I saw a light about the size of a basketball about 200 or more feet above the ground traveling from east

to west... a bright red light giving off a glow... An object above it seemed to hold up the light on a cable or hose appearing to like between the light and the balloon object above it. It continued swinging north to south 3 or 4 minutes by then at a fast rate of speed it went up into the clouds and disappeared they light went out (Blue Book)."

Barth, after only a few hours in Levelland, and after interviewing only a few of the witnesses, thought he had solved some of the sightings. He even came up with an explanation for one of the stalled vehicles. In a message that was transmitted to the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, at Headquarters of the Air Force, he reported, "Investigation proved that a rotor had been changed on the farmer's [Saucido] truck the previous day. One piece of the old rotor had not been removed and had wedged in between the points causing the electrical system to be now nonoperative. This statement was obtained from the mechanic who had repaired the truck (Blue Book)."

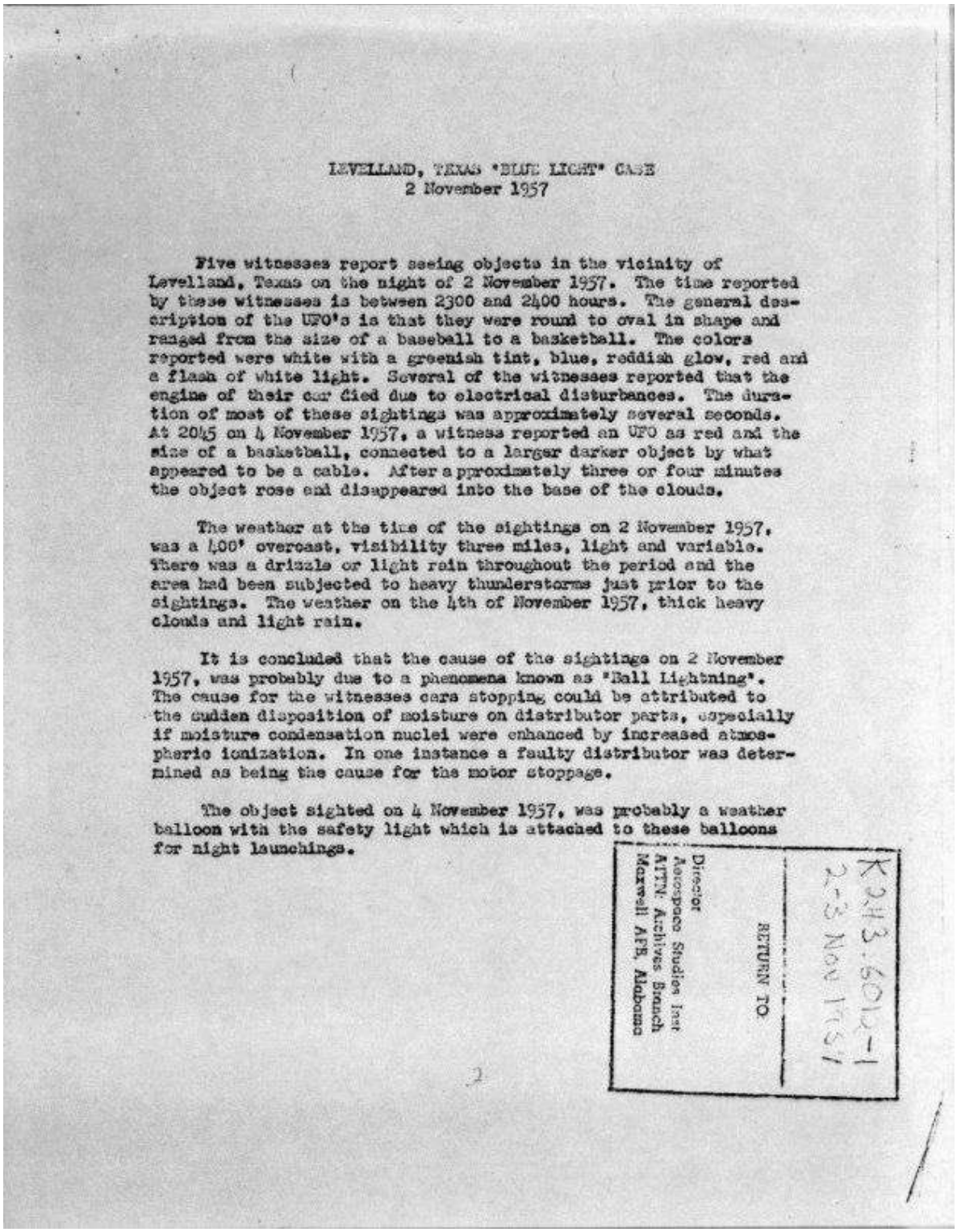
Of course, there were more reports of the car engines being stalled, including that of Ronald Martin, which was investigated by the Air Force. And we can't forget that the sheriff, through his daughter also said that his engine had stalled. The broken rotor scenario doesn't explain those cases. Nor does it explain why Saucido's truck began to operate once the UFO was out of sight.

There is another point that needs to be made. Although some have been dismissive of these sorts of reports because they know of no mechanism in which an engine stalled by an intense magnetic field will spontaneously restart, that seemed to be the situation here. However, a number of the witnesses in these cases made it clear that they took an action to start their cars. In fact, I made a survey of several hundred cases of engines stalled by UFOs as collected by Dr. Mark Rodeghier (1981), of CUFOS, and many of those witnesses reported they physically started the cars. In other cases, the information is ambiguous, meaning it was reported that the cars began to function normally but said nothing about how the engines actually started.

The Air Force investigator did not find, nor did he apparently try to find, some of the witnesses who were in Levelland on November 2, but who had returned to their homes by November 6 when he investigated. It is clear from the Air Force files that Barth didn't speak to Jesse Long, of Waco, Texas, who said the object had killed his engine, which wouldn't be explained by the broken rotor in Saucido's truck. Nor did he find or

interview Jim Wheeler, Jose Alverez, Ray Jones or Frank Williams, the farmers near Petit, the two couples near Shallowater, or the man driving from Seminole to Seagraves, all of whom said the proximity of the object had stalled their car engines and dimmed their lights.

In an unclassified message to the commander of the Air Technical Intelligence Center, it was noted that, "Contrary to [Donald E.] Keyhoe's [Director of NICAP] and Washington press reports only three, not nine persons witnessed the incident. Object observed for only few seconds, not lengthy period as implied by press. Mist, rain, thunderstorms and lightning discharges in scene of incident, fact not quoted in newspaper releases (Blue Book)."Barth went on to propose a number of possible solutions that were speculative in nature. "The amount of rain in the area, together with the condition of the crops, could have developed a phenomenon similar to St. Elmo's fire... The possibility of burning excess gas from nearby oil operations reflecting off low clouds existed... The possibility of lightning stalling a car and extinguishing the lights existed; however, the possibility decreases as the number of such incidents increases... A check with the oil companies in the area revealed that a limited amount of excess gas from oil operations was being burned... A check for downed power lines during the period was made with negative results... The other witnesses reported in newspaper accounts as having observed the object had either disappeared or returned to their homes, leaving no forwarding addresses (Blue Book)." Barth apparently didn’t press Clem or his deputies, nor did he interview the other law enforcement officers who saw the red light nor did he talk to the fire marshal who was close enough for the object to affect his vehicle.



LEVELLAND, TEXAS "BLUE LIGHT" CASE
2 November 1957

Five witnesses report seeing objects in the vicinity of Levelland, Texas on the night of 2 November 1957. The time reported by these witnesses is between 2300 and 2400 hours. The general description of the UFO's is that they were round to oval in shape and ranged from the size of a baseball to a basketball. The colors reported were white with a greenish tint, blue, reddish glow, red and a flash of white light. Several of the witnesses reported that the engine of their car died due to electrical disturbances. The duration of most of these sightings was approximately several seconds. At 2045 on 4 November 1957, a witness reported an UFO as red and the size of a basketball, connected to a larger darker object by what appeared to be a cable. After approximately three or four minutes the object rose and disappeared into the base of the clouds.

The weather at the time of the sightings on 2 November 1957, was a 400' overcast, visibility three miles, light and variable. There was a drizzle or light rain throughout the period and the area had been subjected to heavy thunderstorms just prior to the sightings. The weather on the 4th of November 1957, thick heavy clouds and light rain.

It is concluded that the cause of the sightings on 2 November 1957, was probably due to a phenomena known as "Ball Lightning". The cause for the witnesses cars stopping could be attributed to the sudden disposition of moisture on distributor parts, especially if moisture condensation nuclei were enhanced by increased atmospheric ionization. In one instance a faulty distributor was determined as being the cause for the motor stoppage.

The object sighted on 4 November 1957, was probably a weather balloon with the safety light which is attached to these balloons for night launchings.

RETURN TO
Director
Aerospace Studies Inst
ATTN: Archives Branch
Maxwell AFB, Alabama
K243.6012-1
2-3 Nov 1957

Air Force document that cites more than the three witnesses to the sighting.

And, of course, he never learned about the burned area found in the prairie grass on the ranch north of town. Or, if he did, his report went somewhere other than to Blue Book.

This is not an outrageous idea. There has been testimony from others to suggest that these sorts of reports are not part of the “Blue Book system.” Brigadier General Carroll Bolender said that reports affecting national security were not part of the Blue Book. He didn’t say where those reports went, only that they didn’t end up at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base (Swords, 2010).

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, the Air Force consultant to Blue Book told colleagues on several occasions that the really hot cases went somewhere else. He was close enough to the inner circle to have heard things to suggest that to him. He just wasn’t close enough to find out where, exactly, they went or how he might gain access to them.

There is additional evidence of this. Barth, as noted, spent a day in Levelland conducting his interviews. He was not, however, the only Air Force investigator on this. According to a document in the Blue Book files, Major Daniel R. Kester, the Reese Air Force Base Provost Marshal, visited the “alleged scene in conjunction with local civil authorities. Negative results.” There was a handwritten note next to that notation that said, “They did not see anything unusual.”

So, while Barth takes the heat for his most of a day investigation with a notation that he failed to locate some of the witnesses, there was another “investigation” going on. To this point there is nothing more about this meeting between the Air Force “top cop” in the area, and the civilian law enforcement representatives.

While Barth apparently didn’t spend a lot of time investigating the case, though he was commended for his thorough investigation in a letter in the Blue Book files, the Provost Marshal, also conducted an investigation. That information, which would be relevant to any thorough investigation is missing from the Blue Book files.

What we do find, instead, is a great deal of irrelevant material in the Blue Book files. There might have been thunderstorms, but those had clearly dissipated by the time the sightings began. Oil refining operations created gas that was burned and might have been reflected by the clouds, though the residents of the area would be familiar with those operations and would have no motive to suddenly see strange objects in the reflections on the clouds. Although the Air Force didn't interview them so that to the Air Force they didn't exist, there were a number of people, all named in various newspaper and other media stories, who did report their car engines and lights affected by the proximity of the UFO. And

rather than search for the additional witnesses, the Air Force ignored them.

So contrary to what the Air Force reported internally, and suggested to the press publicly, there were the number of witnesses claimed by Keyhoe. In fact, Keyhoe's number turns out to be too small, when the law enforcement officers are counted. And, the length of the sightings varied from a few seconds to several minutes. The Air Force was attempting to suggest that the witnesses had seen, and misinterpreted, lightning flashes that somehow caused them to stall their vehicles suggest an egg-shaped craft to them.

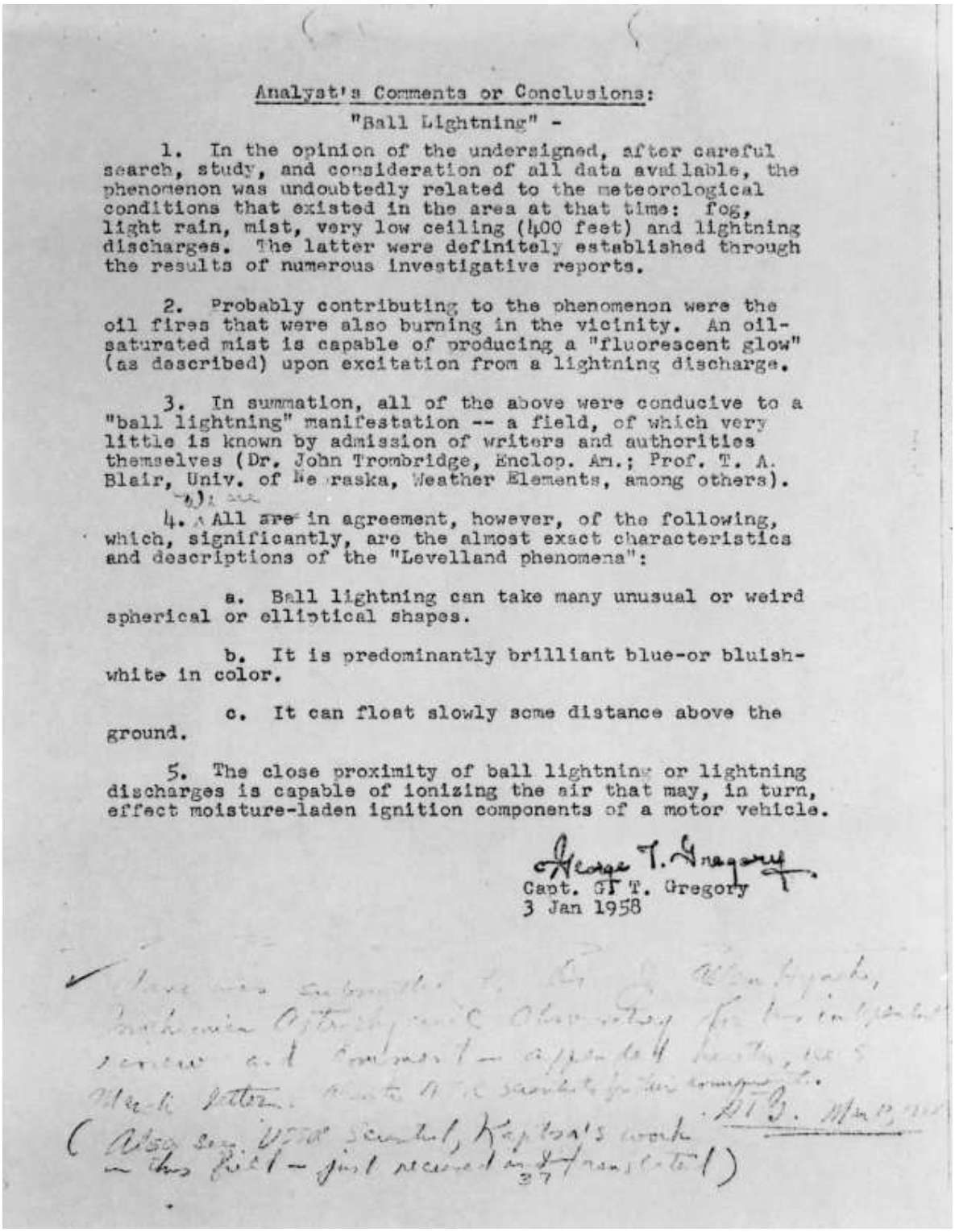
The Air Force did, to their satisfaction, solve the Levelland case. According to the Project Blue Book files, "After very extensive checks and detailed investigations by the Air Force and with complete collaboration with both Air Force and non-governmental scientists it was concluded that the sighting was due to a very rare phenomena, ball lightning."

In another part of the official Air Force report, it was suggested that, "It is concluded that the cause of the sightings on 2 November 1957, was probably due to a phenomena [sic] known as 'ball lightning'. The cause for the witnesses [sic] cars stopping could be attributed to the sudden disposition of moisture on distributor parts, especially if moisture condensation nuclei were enhanced by increased atmospheric ionization. In one instance a faulty distributor was determined as being the cause of the motor stoppage."

However, the existence of ball lightning was in dispute in 1957. Ball lightning is extremely rare and that there are no cases of it being reported in the same area multiple times. It flashes into existence, can penetrate walls, or roll down the road, and then flashes out of existence. At its largest, ball lightning, is small, only about a foot in diameter. It is only recently that science has been able to confirm the existence of ball lightning, so, in 1957, the Air Force was reaching for an explanation just to write off the case. In 1957, the attitude in the Air Force investigation was to explain sightings rather than investigate them. Barth, and his most of one day search for witnesses, shows just how important UFO reports were to them.

What is important in this case is the number of independent witnesses who told of the object in the area and added the dimension of dimmed lights, radio failure and the stalling of car engines. Many of the

claims were made to the sheriff or police before there was any media attention of the sightings. Those suggesting some sort of mass hysteria have a major stumbling block and that is how did these witnesses tell the same story within an hour or so of one another without hearing the media reports that began the next day? Remember, there was no Facebook, Instagram or Twitter. People did not discuss everything that happened to them on social media platforms because they didn’t exist.



Analyst's Comments or Conclusions:

"Ball Lightning" -

1. In the opinion of the undersigned, after careful search, study, and consideration of all data available, the phenomenon was undoubtedly related to the meteorological conditions that existed in the area at that time: fog, light rain, mist, very low ceiling (400 feet) and lightning discharges. The latter were definitely established through the results of numerous investigative reports.

2. Probably contributing to the phenomenon were the oil fires that were also burning in the vicinity. An oil-saturated mist is capable of producing a "fluorescent glow" (as described) upon excitation from a lightning discharge.

3. In summation, all of the above were conducive to a "ball lightning" manifestation -- a field, of which very little is known by admission of writers and authorities themselves (Dr. John Trombridge, Enclop. Am.; Prof. T. A. Blair, Univ. of Nebraska, Weather Elements, among others).

4. All are in agreement, however, of the following, which, significantly, are the almost exact characteristics and descriptions of the "Levelland phenomena":

a. Ball lightning can take many unusual or weird spherical or elliptical shapes.

b. It is predominantly brilliant blue-or bluish-white in color.

c. It can float slowly some distance above the ground.

5. The close proximity of ball lightning or lightning discharges is capable of ionizing the air that may, in turn, effect moisture-laden ignition components of a motor vehicle.

George T. Gregory
Capt. GT T. Gregory
3 Jan 1958

Air Force report on Ball Lightning.

There is sometimes talk of multiple chains of evidence in UFO sightings, meaning that there are things going on besides just the witness reports. Yes, eyewitness accounts are one chain of evidence and

the fact that we have many who told of their experiences before there was media coverage is important. It is also important that the witnesses were scattered all over that area of Texas meaning they didn't know one another and didn't know of one another's sightings.

A second chain would be the interaction with the environment. Had the Air Force acted quickly, we don't know what they might have learned from the cars that had been stalled in various areas around Levelland. It wasn't just Saucido and his truck, but others in various makes of cars and farm equipment. Checking the big combines with dual engines might have yielded some interesting results, but the lone Air Force investigator never thought of that and didn't even know about some of the witnesses.

The third chain of evidence is, of course, the burned area that had been reported to Sheriff Clem. Yes, we learned about it decades after the fact, but Burleson did find two independent witnesses for it. Unfortunately, that doesn't allow for the gathering of evidence and validation of the claim. Again, we don't know what sort of information might have been found by a proper scientific investigation which was the mission of Project Blue Book.

So, we had witnesses to a brightly lighted craft that landed. We had interaction with the environment in the form of what is called electromagnetic effects. And we had landing traces in the form of the burned areas. Three different chains of evidence for this case. The only thing that might have made it better would be good quality photographs from a couple of the witnesses or a piece of material from the craft itself.

Instead the Air Force responded officially to the sightings with a single NCO who talked to a few people over the course of a day and then left, concluding that Saucido's rotor had failed, no one saw much of anything, and that too many people started talking about UFOs too quickly after the fact. We learned, in the Blue Book files, however, that another NCO interviewed the Sheriff over the telephone, and the Reese AFB Provost Marshal accompanied some of the civil authorities into the field.

The Air Force investigator made much of the fact that within days of the sighting, hundreds of others were telling tales of low-level flying saucers and their electromagnetic effects. Once the story was out, in the newspapers, on the radio, and told on television, then a "mass hysteria" could kick in. But that doesn't explain the sightings in Levelland late on the night of November 2 and very early in the morning of November 3.

It could just as easily be suggested that Levelland marked, not the beginning of the wave of UFO reports, but marked the middle of it. The increased number of reports to the Air Force after the Levelland sighting might be explained in a simple fashion. People, now realizing that the Air Force was gathering the information about UFOs, felt an obligation to report what they had seen. It might be said that people, hearing that others were reporting these things, thought it safe to mention that they too, had seen something strange. The Levelland story sparked, not a series of sightings but a series of reports, a subtle but real difference.

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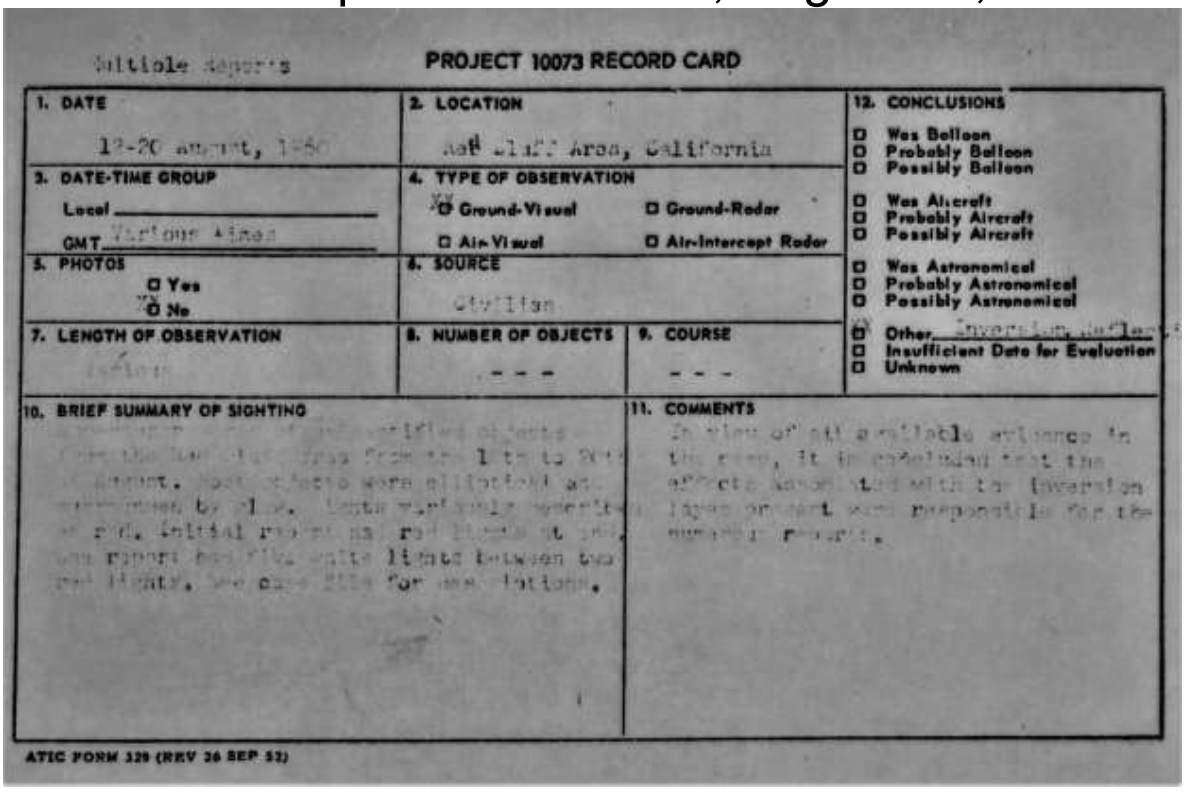
Chapter 9: Red Bluff, August 13, 1960



Suitable Reports

PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD

1. DATE: 12-20 August, 1960	2. LOCATION: Red Bluff Area, California	12. CONCLUSIONS ☐ Was Balloon ☐ Probably Balloon ☐ Possibly Balloon ☐ Was Aircraft ☐ Probably Aircraft ☐ Possibly Aircraft ☐ Was Astronomical ☐ Probably Astronomical ☐ Possibly Astronomical ☒ Other: Inversion Layer ☐ Insufficient Data for Evaluation ☐ Unknown
3. DATE-TIME GROUP Local _____ GMT Various Times	4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION ☒ Ground-Visual ☐ Ground-Radar ☐ Air-Visual ☐ Air-Intercept Radar	
5. PHOTOS ☐ Yes ☒ No	6. SOURCE: Civilian	
7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION: Various	8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS: - - -	9. COURSE: - - -

10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING

11. COMMENTS

In view of all available evidence in the case, it is considered that the effects associated with the inversion layer phenomenon were responsible for the numerous reports.

ATIC FORM 329 (REV 26 SEP 52)

Project Blue Book Project Card.

It can be said that the series of sightings in and around Red Bluff, California, began on August 13, 1960. Two California Highway Patrolmen, Charles A. Carson and Stanley Scott were the original witnesses. At 11:50 p.m. as they drove east about two miles from Corning, California, they spotted an object about a quarter mile away and flying at an estimated 500 feet. According to a statement taken by the Air Force and available in the Project Blue Book files:

> On 13 August 1960 at 2345 hours [11:45 p.m.] PST, two California highway patrolmen, [names redacted but were Carson and Scott] observed an unidentified flying object while patrolling 18 miles south of Red Bluff, California. The two officers stated that the object suddenly appeared directly in front of their patrol car and their first impression was that it was an aircraft about to crash. The officers leaped from their car in order to be in a better position to act after the expected crash. When outside of their car both officers were immediately struck by the absence of sound, but assumed the aircraft was without power. As the object approached within 200 –

> 300 feet of the ground it suddenly reversed itself, and at high speed gained approximately 500 feet of altitude, where it came to complete stop. The officers described the object as surrounded by a glow, and at each end of the round or elliptical object there were red lights. At times there were approximately five white lights visible between the red lights. Officer Scott's impression was that the object was sweeping the area with red light beams and estimated that six or seven sweeps were made. He further stated that it appeared to take positive action to avoid his shining the red light of the patrol vehicle upon it. Both officers described the motion as abrupt, but generally toward the east and reported that they followed in their vehicle. As they followed and watched the object, it was approached by a similar object. Finally both objects disappeared below the eastern horizon. Upon return to the Tehama County Sheriff's Office, it was determined that two deputies and the night jailer had also experienced seeing the object and their impressions were the same as the two patrolmen (Hynek, 1977).

Coral Lorenzen, in *The A.P.R.O. Bulletin* (September, 1960), wrote, "For the ensuing two hours and 15 minutes, Carson and Scott pursued the object." While they did attempt to follow the object, calling it a pursuit might be a bit overly dramatic. They did try to keep it in sight as it maneuvered around the area but they weren't exactly chasing it.

There was more information available about their sighting that didn't make it into the Project Blue Book file that is relevant to our discussion here. Carson, in his official police report, did say that they had a clear view of the craft (Clark, 2018). He said that the UFO was metallic looking and that it was shaped something like a football more than 100 feet long. He said that they thought those white lights they saw were windows rather than lights attached to the hull.

The craft came to within 150 yards of them and both officers reached for their side arms, which were loaded with armor-piercing rounds. The object didn't come any closer. Instead it performed a number of fantastic maneuvers, shooting around the sky. While this was going on, their radios were filled with static that didn't completely block the two-way communications. This suggested some kind of electromagnetic effect but not as powerful as that reported near Levelland.

Scott switched on the patrol car's own red lights and focused on the UFO. Scott reported that as soon as the light hit the object, it darted

away. Told that other patrol cars were on the way, the officers decided to follow the UFO as best they could. He said that the object stayed to the south of them and kept up its erratic maneuvers. Because it was flying so low, they periodically lost sight of the craft. They did stop and climb up on their car's hood so that they could see the UFO hovering on the other side of a hill. All at once it shot up into the sky, came to within 150 feet and then headed eastward. Eventually the object got farther and farther away from them and they gave up the chase.

There is another point that would become important later. Scott and Carson drove to a fire observation tower that wasn't all that far away. While there were no fire spotters in the tower, it was unlocked. They ran to the top and spotted the UFO though it was only a light in the distance, near the horizon. Then, however, it began to climb higher, over hills three miles to the east and began flying toward the east. Before it disappeared for the last time, another light appeared in the south, approaching the first. Everything was gone by 2:05 a.m.

During the sighting, they were in communication with Deputy Clarence Fry who was at the Tehama County Sheriff's Office. Scott wanted Fry to alert the other cars in the area and suggest they head for the scene of the sighting (Mystery Sky Object, 1960; Highway Patrolmen, 1960). Scott also suggested that Fry check with the Air Force radar station in Red Bluff. This would become a point of contention as the investigations into the sighting began.

Fry and Deputy Max Montgomery left Red Bluff and drove to Los Molinos. They stopped on a hillside to search for the UFO. In his report, Fry wrote:

> At approximately 12:30 a.m. ... [we] observed four objects in the Western sky [;] they were traveling from the south to the north in a straight line and at times they would go straight up or down… one of the objects seemed to hover over the Red Bluff area. After a short time there was a [sic] Object seen going from the North to the South (Clark, 2018).

There were others in the area who also saw the strange lights. Sheriff Lyle Williams said that he had reports from several sources but he wouldn't release the names of any of these witnesses. The Associated Press, however, did report a sighting in Willow Creek about 100 miles from Red Bluff. The unidentified witnesses were two young girls who told their mother about what they had seen. The mother, identified as Mrs.

John Morse, said, “The description given by the two highway patrolmen is identical to what our children said they saw (Strange Sky Object, 1960; Clark 2019).”

Fry had made a call to the Red Bluff Air Station and talked to the commander there, Major Malden LeRoy. Fry said that Leroy told him that there been unidentified objects spotted by radar (Lorenzen, 1960).

However, when Carson and Scott drove to the base later, LeRoy told them that he had nothing on their radarscopes. Scott and Carson wanted to talk with the radar operator, but Leroy refused permission. Coral Lorenzen reported that LeRoy had told them, Carson and Scott, that his equipment would have been incapable of picking up anything that had been that close to the ground.

According to a press release about the sighting issued by the Air Force, an officer at the Air Technical Intelligence Center had called the base on August 16, three days after the sightings. LeRoy told the officer that they had tracked nothing. In a follow up call, LeRoy denied having ever told anyone that they had tracked the UFOs. It was mentioned that the police officers were unconvinced by LeRoy’s denial (Blue Book).

It might also be relevant to note here that Air Force regulations (AFR 200 – 2) actually prevented LeRoy from making any statement about an unidentified sighting. If there was a terrestrial explanation, then LeRoy could comment on it. If there was no solution, he was directed to refer all inquiries to the Secretary of the Air Force, Office of Public Information.

Later that day, that is August 14, nearly twenty-four hours after the first sighting by Carson and Scott, at 10:05 p.m., Fry received a call alerting him that Deputy Montgomery was watching an object that had touched down twice. Although Montgomery was in Los Molinos, Fry was able to see the object from his post in Red Bluff. He watched as it came out of the west, stopped and hovered for a short time.

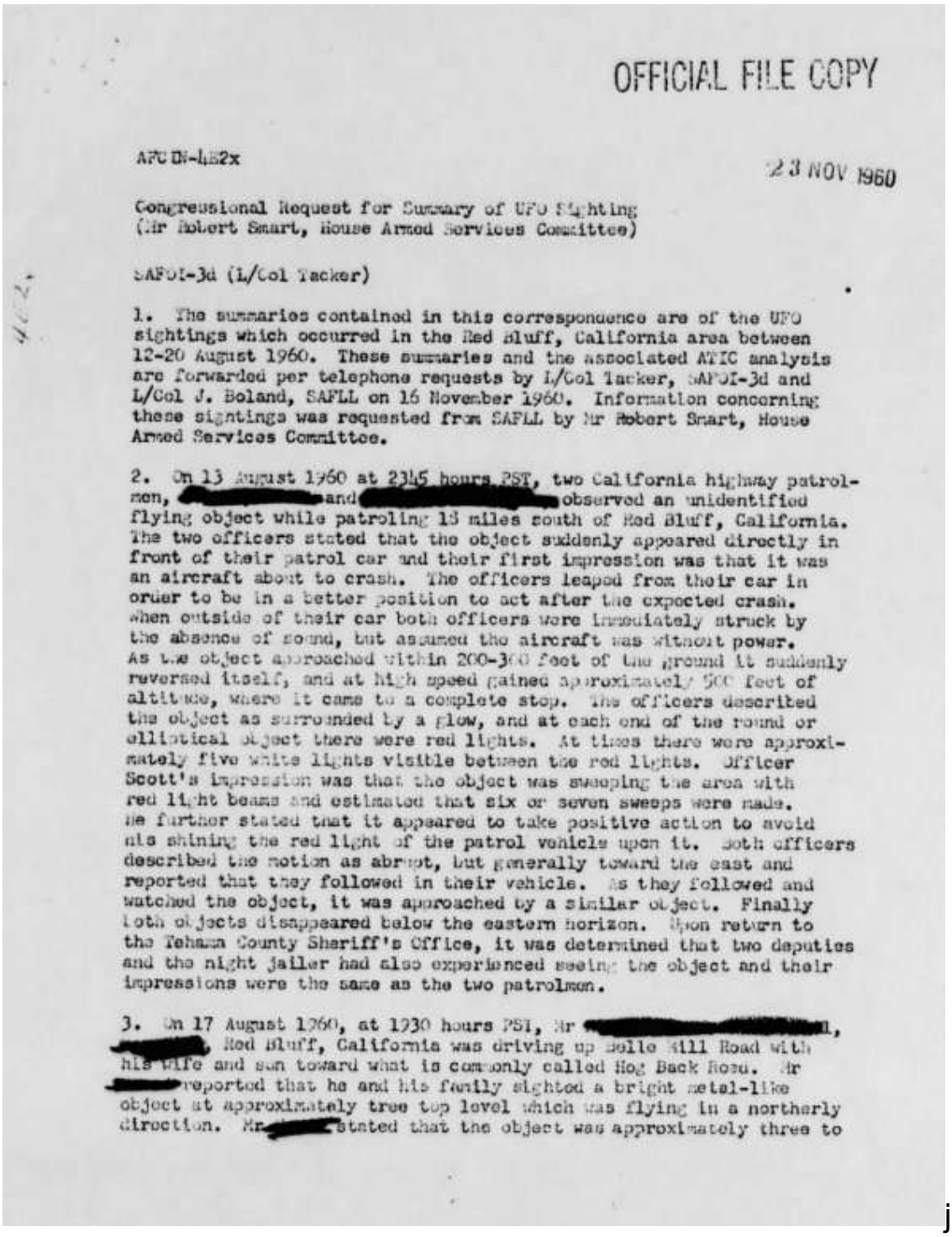
Fry took four trustees out of the station but by that time the object had disappeared. A local man joined them and spotted the UFO to the northwest. All of them saw it. Fry would later write that the object “looked like a large Rail Road car with two large Red Lights [with] one on each end (Clark, 2019).” The UFO emitted a pale-yellow glow. There seemed to be four large rectangular windows through which he could see a white light.

There were additional witnesses to this sighting. They all watched as the UFO shot off to the south, toward Corning, California. There a police

officer saw it west of the city and flying south at a high-rate of speed.

The sightings that began on August 13 with Carson and Scott that lasted until early morning of August 14, and then with the sightings by Fry and others later in the day, were the beginning of a series of reports from around Red Bluff area.

C. L. Shurtlett, in Vallejo, was looking for the passage of the Echo I satellite at 2:30 a.m. on August 15. Instead, he saw a great big red thing that was at about 300 to 500 feet. He would say, “I couldn’t hear any sound so I knew it wasn’t a



OFFICIAL FILE COPY

AFCIN-4B2x

23 NOV 1960

Congressional Request for Summary of UFO Sighting
(Mr Robert Smart, House Armed Services Committee)

SAFOI-3d (L/Col Tacker)

1. The summaries contained in this correspondence are of the UFO sightings which occurred in the Red Bluff, California area between 12-20 August 1960. These summaries and the associated ATIC analysis are forwarded per telephone requests by L/Col Tacker, SAFOI-3d and L/Col J. Boland, SAFLL on 16 November 1960. Information concerning these sightings was requested from SAFLL by Mr Robert Smart, House Armed Services Committee.

2. On 13 August 1960 at 2345 hours PST, two California highway patrolmen, [redacted] and [redacted] observed an unidentified flying object while patrolling 13 miles south of Red Bluff, California. The two officers stated that the object suddenly appeared directly in front of their patrol car and their first impression was that it was an aircraft about to crash. The officers leaped from their car in order to be in a better position to act after the expected crash. When outside of their car both officers were immediately struck by the absence of sound, but assumed the aircraft was without power. As the object approached within 200-300 feet of the ground it suddenly reversed itself, and at high speed gained approximately 500 feet of altitude, where it came to a complete stop. The officers described the object as surrounded by a glow, and at each end of the round or elliptical object there were red lights. At times there were approximately five white lights visible between the red lights. Officer Scott's impression was that the object was sweeping the area with red light beams and estimated that six or seven sweeps were made. He further stated that it appeared to take positive action to avoid his shining the red light of the patrol vehicle upon it. Both officers described the motion as abrupt, but generally toward the east and reported that they followed in their vehicle. As they followed and watched the object, it was approached by a similar object. Finally both objects disappeared below the eastern horizon. Upon return to the Tehama County Sheriff's Office, it was determined that two deputies and the night jailer had also experienced seeing the object and their impressions were the same as the two patrolmen.

3. On 17 August 1960, at 1930 hours PST, Mr [redacted], Red Bluff, California was driving up Belle Mill Road with his wife and son toward what is commonly called Hog Back Road. Mr [redacted] reported that he and his family sighted a bright metal-like object at approximately tree top level which was flying in a northerly direction. Mr [redacted] stated that the object was approximately three to

jet plane or anything like that… It was the most beautiful thing I've ever seen.

Official report on the Red Bluff sightings.

four miles away and the first impression was that it was a large helicopter. When Mr [redacted] and his family reached the spot where they thought the object to be, they sighted it approximately one-half mile away and approximately 100 feet below them. The object appeared to immediately pick up speed, rising out of the canyon and passing over the road in front of the family. It dropped from sight for a few moments and was then seen traveling up a branch canyon. The object was described as completely round and approximately 35 to 50 feet in diameter. When it rose from the canyon and passed over the road it appeared to have a light near the nose. The light had a reddish purple hue. The object was reported to have a second light which was located on the back. The second light appeared as a narrow bluish band. The object was estimated to have a speed of 25-30 miles per hour.

4. On 17 August 1960 at approximately 2100 hours local, [redacted] Dept of Correction, Mrs [redacted] ForestLook-Out, and Miss [redacted] sighted an unidentified flying object from the forestry look-out at Inskip Mountain. The object was described as a dull red light above the horizon. The object was reported to have faded and reappeared several times in gradual cycles. The object was reported to be generally stationary. At approximately 2130 hours another object was sighted which was similar to the first; however, it appeared to be moving from right to left at a constant elevation.

5. As evidenced by Exhibits I and N of attachment #1 to this document, there were many sightings of UFO's in the California area between 12-20 August 1960. These exhibits also confirm the fact that the circumstances surrounding these sightings were generally the same.

6. This case was brought to the attention of ATIC on 16 August 1960 by a telephone call from L/Col L. Tacker, SAFOI-3d. On this date a TWX (Atch #2) was sent to McClelland AFB, California requesting a full and detailed investigation in accordance with the provisions of AFR 200-2, dated 14 September 1959.

7. On 16 August 1960, ATIC made telephone contact with the 859th Radar Squadron (SAGE) (ADC), Red Bluff Air Station, Red Bluff, California. The 859th is tied in with the Portland Air Defense Sector, Adair Air Force Base. Major LeRoy of the Radar Station reported that nothing had appeared on their scopes which called for a scramble between 12-16 August 1960. Contact was again established with the 859th on 17 November 1960, and at this time Major LeRoy denied having informed patrolmen [redacted] and [redacted] that an unidentified object was on the scope of his unit on the night of the sighting. The Radar Unit at Red Bluff is a SAGE station. The equipment at Red Bluff is only monitored at that station and is tied in to the Portland Air Defense Sector, which has the identification and intercept responsibility. Major LeRoy informed the California Highway Patrol that his station had no capability for identification, but that in view of the fact that no scramble had occurred, no unidentified object was on the scope.

The major stated that the officers were not convinced that his infor-

mation was all true.

8. For further support of the data collected during the investigation of this case ATIC obtained from the Air Weather Service (AWS) at Asheville, North Carolina the AWAN Forms 31 (Adiabatic Charts) for the Red Bluff, California area covering the period 3-24 August 1960. The weather stations at Red Bluff, Chico, and Redding, California are second order stations. These second order stations observe on a limited schedule, generally daylight hours, and do no complete adiabatic charts. The most representative records available for determing the vertical temperature gradient for Red Bluff are the Adiabatic Charts from Oakland, California and Medford, Oregon. Red Bluff is located almost exactly half way between these two cities, 165 miles from Oakland and 155 miles from Medford. Since the general weather for Oakland, Red Bluff, and Medford was the same, it is safe to assume that interpolation will give a representative picture of the vertical temperature gradient at Red Bluff. The Adiabatic Charts indicate that a strong temperature inversion was prevalent in the entire northern California area during the period of the sightings.

9. The conclusion of ATIC is that the sightings which occurred in the Red Bluff area were due to atmospheric refraction. It is an impossible task to determine what the exact light source was for each specific incident, but the planet Mars was the most probable culprit in the instance of the highway patrolmen. The planet at the time of the sighting was just below the horizon and probably move into view due to the refraction of its light by the atmosphere. A contributing factor to the sightings could have been the layer of smoke which hung over the area in a thin stratiform layer. This smoke came from the forest fires in the area and hung in a layer due to the stable conditions associated with the inversion.

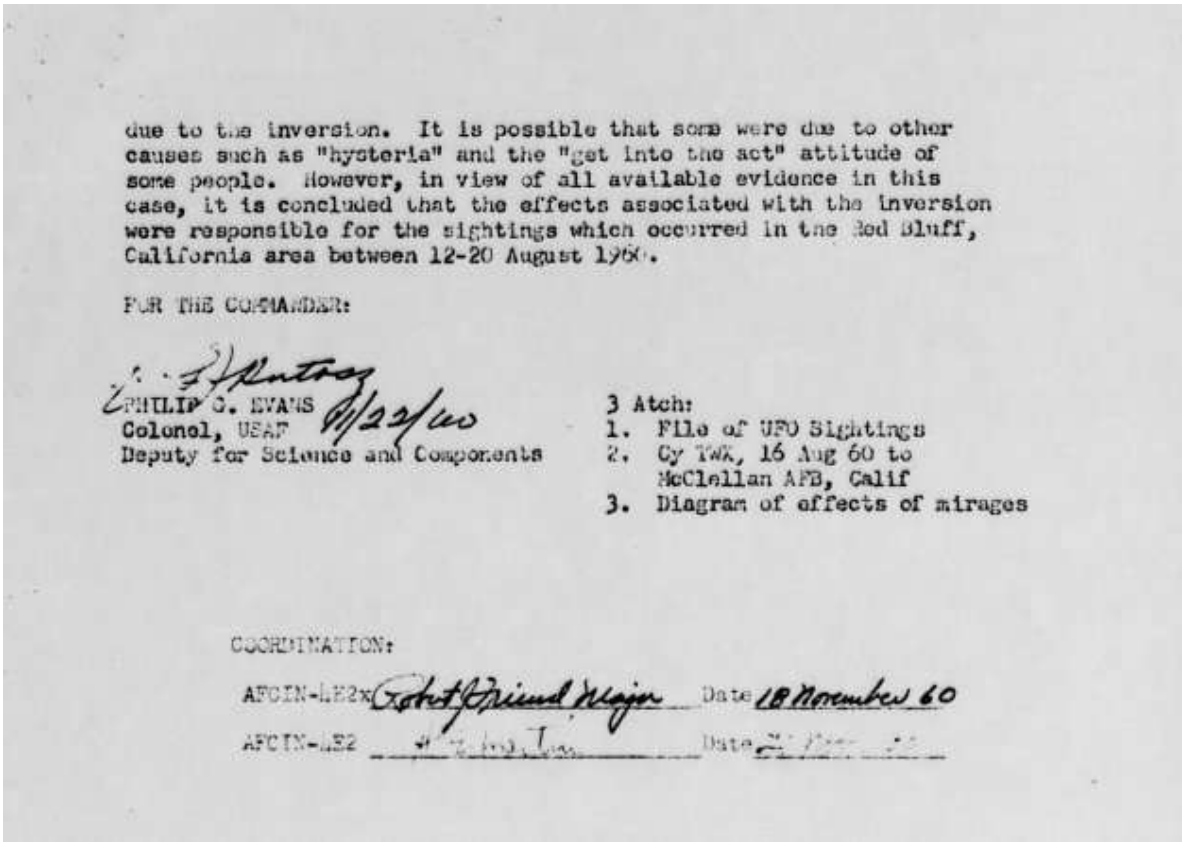
10. The usual occurrence in nature is for the temperature of the atmosphere to decrease as altitude increases. This change in temperature with altitude is known as the "lapse rate." In some cases, however, instead of decreasing with altitude the temperature actually increases and the condition is termed an "inversion."

11. In passing from one medium to another of different densities or different densities of the same medium, waves of radiant energy are refracted or bent from their original straight line course, except when entering at 90° to the surface separating the two media. The bending is explained by the fact that the waves travel at different speeds in media of different densities. This, in effect, means that a person can in fact look around a corner, or a curve when there are an infinite number of layers of slightly different densities next to each other, as in the atmosphere. Due to the fact that light of different wave lengths (colors) bend at different angles, white light is separated into color bands (spectrum) ranging usually from red to violet. The longer wave lengths (red) being bent less than the short (blue). This secondary effect of refraction is called dispersion.

12. In addition to the usual results of atmospheric refraction, special optical effects known as mirages may occur when there are strong temperature contrasts in adjacent layers of air. Mirages fall into two general categories termed "inferior" and "superior." The most common mirage is the inferior type, occurring when the temperature profile is following the normal pattern of decreasing with altitude. However, for the condition to occur, a layer of extremely warm air must exist near the surface with relatively cooler and, therefore, denser air above it. Convection would normally occur under these conditions, but usually has not begun due to lack of turbulence and the slow transfer of heat due to conduction and radiation. These conditions cause the light which reaches the eye to be less curved than normally, and in some extreme conditions to actually be curved in the opposite direction. The effect of inferior mirages is to shorten the distance to ones apparent horizon (see Atch #3). In this type of mirage a distant object is sometimes seen inverted and below the real object. This is the type of mirage which is so familiar to persons on deserts. The water they see being an inverted image of the sky. An everyday experience with a mirage of this type is the wet appearance of known to be dry highways. The wet spot remaining some distance ahead of the car. These mirages are called "inferior" because the image is below the real object. When the opposite temperature conditions occur, a cold layer of air with warmer air on top (inversion), the conditions produce a superior mirage. These mirages tend to increase the distance to our horizon and their effects are much more startling than inferior mirages. When these conditions occur a person can actually see objects which normally would be below his horizon. Sometimes the images will be highly magnified or extremely distorted. This mirage is called a superior mirage because the image occurs above the actual object. In this explanation reference has been made to layers of air, but it should be understood that the transition from one layer to the next is not abrupt. There is mixing and a gradual change in the refractive power of the air, and the effects seen in mirages are due to this continuous variation.

13. A number of the witnesses mentioned that the object they observed was moving at some approximate speed. The speeds most commonly mentioned were centered around about 35 miles per hour. It should be noted that these witnesses were riding in cars and that this is probably the speed at which they were driving. It is a common characteristic of mirages that the image remains a constant distance from the observer in order that the geometry associated with the phenomena remains fairly consistent. Mirages of water holes seen in the desert are constantly out of reach. It is probable that the witnesses' estimates of speed were reached by the fact that the object appeared to keep pace with their cars.

14. It is quite probable that reports of all of the sightings which occurred in California during the period 12-20 August 1960 did not reach ATIC. It is, therefore, impossible to make an accurate estimate as to how many sightings actually occurred and what percentage were



due to the inversion. It is possible that some were due to other causes such as "hysteria" and the "get into the act" attitude of some people. However, in view of all available evidence in this case, it is concluded that the effects associated with the inversion were responsible for the sightings which occurred in the Red Bluff, California area between 12-20 August 1960.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

PHILIP G. EVANS
Colonel, USAF
Deputy for Science and Components

3 Atch:
1. File of UFO Sightings
2. Cy TWX, 16 Aug 60 to McClellan AFB, Calif
3. Diagram of effects of mirages

COORDINATION:

AFCIN-1E2x Robert J. Friend Major Date 18 November 60

AFCIN-1E2 [illegible] Date [illegible]

Anyhow, it moved over the Carquinez Bridge and then zipped in a straight line over the Georgia Street hill and went out of sight toward Blue Rock Springs."

Back in Corning, the next day, August 16, at about 8:30 p.m., four people watched two cigar-shaped objects with red and white lights. The UFOs, maneuvering erratically for about ten minutes, finally disappeared to the northeast. Here they described something more than just bright lights maneuvering in the night sky.

On the same day, in Red Bluff, about mid-evening, it was reported, "Two bright objects" described as much larger than stars, flew from north to south and disappeared behind the hills.

In Roseville, at about 9:50 p.m., Mr. and Mrs. Ron Wells, along with their two children were standing in the yard, waiting for the Echo I satellite to fly over. They spotted an object coming from the opposite direction, approaching from the southwest at an "unbelievable speed." They thought that it resembled a flying wing, and while it was in sight, flashed two bursts of white light. It made no sound. The family was sure that it wasn't an airplane. They had seen several planes earlier and the

object didn't look like or sound like them. Once again, there was a description of an object as opposed to just lights.

Later that same evening in Roseville, others, including two police officers saw two oblong objects described as big as a washtub. They watched the objects as they maneuvered erratically for about an hour. The officers gave chase when the objects took off, following them out of town and watched as the UFOs finally flashed away at a high rate of speed.

Also, on August 16, at a point between Mineral and Red Bluff, about twenty people from a local lodge watched six brilliant red and white lights to the south. They flew in an erratic pattern along the mountains, periodically hovering and then speeding up, flying in a loose formation. Two of the objects did leave the formation and briefly descended to a point between the trees and the mountains. Two of the witnesses, Alton D. Perry and W. J. Gonzales, were law enforcement officers. Perry, in an official report, wrote, "They were much brighter than any aircraft we know of. At times their lights appeared like a welding torch (Clark, 2019)."

Perry and another witness, Donald M. Stout, described as a lodge employee, filed reports with NICAP. In that report, Perry estimated the UFOs were about three miles away.

Coincidentally, one of the objects reported by Perry and Stout, might have been one of the objects seen by Fry and Montgomery as they were driving toward Mineral at 11:20 p.m. They thought the object was three or four miles south of them. They saw it hover, and then fly off to the south. At 11:45, when they met with Perry and Gonzalez at the police station in Dales, about 25 miles west of Mineral, Fry and Montgomery saw a yellowish object with flashing red lights on it. Fry believed it to be in the Red Bluff area.

The sightings continued the next day. Early in the evening on August 17, several people including Marion Hall saw a weird object with two big white lights in front and red lights in the back. Hall said that it made a whining noise like one of those spinning top toys for children. It would disappear and then return, with the noise getting louder as it got closer. When it turned up the front lights, it would light up Folsom for four blocks around.

At 7:30 p.m., Robert Heard, traveling with his wife and son up Belle Hill Road, saw what he thought was a helicopter headed northward over the treetops three to four miles away. A few minutes later, they saw it

again, but now only about a half mile away, and 100 feet below them traveling up a branch canyon. He described the object as metallic, round and between 35 to 50 feet in diameter. It picked up speed, crossed the road in front of them. They said that it had a reddish-purple light on the nose and a bluish one at the rear that appeared as a bluish band. They thought that it was flying at 25 to 30 miles per hour.

On August 18, the Police Chief Harold Barnum and three of his officers, Pete Chinca, Jack Brown and George Kerr, saw the objects after citizens reported seeing three objects near Mount Shasta. The objects remained in the area for about two hours and were described as being very round and star like. They had red and blue and possibly green lights.

Corrine Bay, in Redlands, while working on a crossword puzzle, heard a roaring sound and felt a vibration at 1:45 a.m. Outside she saw lights and thought she was looking at an airplane. When the sound didn't fade, she looked out again, seeing a "quite large" object hovering over the Street. It had a row of red lights along the side. She also said that it was fatter than a football, more like a flattened circle. She thought that there was a dome molded into the top. Again, another witness saw an object that could not have been a star or other natural phenomenon.

There were additional witnesses to the sighting. She woke up her brother and sister-in-law, Veryl and Myrtle Bay. Veryl ran into the front yard and Myrtle headed to the back porch. They saw the UFO moving to the west, heading toward San Bernardino. They said there was a white light on either end. There was a red light flashing. There was a continuous roar. It finally disappeared from view at about 2 a.m.

One of the last sightings was reported in Honeydew about 9:50 p.m. on August 19. Leonard and Marie Meland were looking for Echo I when they spotted a wing or V-shaped object fly in from the south. The object was glowing red in the front and had lights on the inside of the "V." When it was directly overhead, it turned to the northeast. The red lights faded into white, showing a "fish-tail" in the rear. They watched it for about two minutes. Shortly after the object vanished, Echo I appeared and at 10:00 a.m. a northbound commercial airliner flew over.

The Air Force did investigate this series of sightings in a rather haphazard matter. First Lieutenant David Snyder was the investigator who took statements from Carson and Scott, gathered some information that had been published in the newspapers, and had interviewed those

at the Air Force radar station that was locked in some controversy (Blue Book).

Snyder also interviewed two women, their names redacted in the report, who said they had sighted a UFO from the Inskip Mountain Look-Out Tower. It was “described as a dull red light above the horizon. The object was reported to have faded and reappeared several times in gradual cycles. The object was reported to be generally stationary. At approximately 2130 hours [9:30 p.m.] another object was sighted which was similar to the first; however, it appeared to be moving from right to left at a constant elevation (Blue Book).”

In an official report, provided in the Project Blue Book files, Duane K. Blisbend, the chief of the Investigation and Inspection Section, wrote:

> 8. Based upon allegations by the citizenry that UFOs had been appearing nightly in the area north and east of Red Bluff, California, the undersigned established a vigil in the Inskip Look-Out Tower on the night of Friday, 19 August 1960, between the hours of 1830 [6:30 p.m.] – 0200. No objects were observed.
>
> 9. At 2000 hours [8:00 p.m.], Saturday, 21 August 1960, the undersigned was at the Sheriff’s Office in Red Bluff, at which time an UFO was reported by Criminal Investigator [name redacted], Red Bluff, California. The undersigned went immediately to the address and was shown a very distant round object having a reddish hue. The horizon was extremely smoky due to forest fires in the area. The object was observed for 30 minutes until hidden by smoke. At 0200 hours the same date contact was visually re-established and the object was identified as a star.

It must be noted here that Colonel Philip G. Evans, Deputy for Science and Components, wrote, “It is quite probable that reports of all of the sightings which occurred in California during the period 12 – 20 August 1960 did not reach ATIC (Blue Book).” Or, in other words, if there was no report filed in Air Force channels, then the sighting didn’t exist and was not investigated. It is clear that the Air Force did not actively pursue sighting information if it was not reported directly to them.

But that doesn’t mean that they didn’t have an explanation for the sightings from around the Red Bluff area. Once the Air Force got involved, the situation changed. According to the Project Blue Book press release, an officer at ATIC located at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, called the radar facility in California. Major LeRoy said they has

seen nothing on their radar. It was noted that LeRoy didn't believe that the police officers, Carson and Scott, who had visited him were convinced by his answers. In more precise words, LeRoy thought that the officers believed he was lying.

Air Force officers from McClellan Air Force Base, did attempt an investigation. Carson thought it was more tongue-in-cheek than a real attempt to find any answers. According to that investigation:

> The sightings which occurred in the Red Bluff area were due to ATMOSPHERIC REFRACTION. It is impossible to determine the exact light source for each specific incident, but the planet Mars was the most probable culprit in the instance of the highway patrolmen. The planet, at the time of the sighting was just below the horizon and probably hove into view due to the refraction of its light by the atmosphere. A contributing factor to the sightings could have been the layer of smoke which hung over the area in a thin stratiform layer. This smoke came from the forest fires in the area hung in a layer due to the stable conditions associated with the inversion (Blue Book).

NICAP had a different opinion. Walter Webb, an astronomer, disagreed with the Air Force. He provided his own analysis that said:

> The official USAF explanation for the Red Bluff sighting was a refraction of the planet Mars and/or the stars Aldebaran and Betelgeuse. At NICAP's request I checked the positions of the planet and the two stars for the date, time, and place of the observation. It was found that all three objects were *below* the eastern horizon at the start of the sighting, that Mars did not rise above the horizon until about an hour after the sighting began, that Aldebaran did not rise until 1 a.m., and Betelgeuse not until 3 a.m., an hour after the sighting was over. Atmospheric refraction can elevate celestial objects above the horizon by no more than 35 minutes of arc (a little more than the apparent diameter of the sun or moon). Refraction can also cause a star or planet to appear to shift or wobble slightly. However, the Red Bluff object reportedly performed violent maneuvers over a wide area of the eastern sky before disappearing below the eastern horizon (a celestial object in the east would have continued to rise higher in the sky and eventually set in the west). Further, the object described by highway patrolmen Scott and Carson bore no resemblance at all to a

> refracted star or planet – a very large, oblong object shaped somewhat like a football with a red light on each end and a row of white lights visible at times between the red lights. According to the officers, the object swept the sky and ground six or seven times with a red beam of light. In my opinion the explanation used by the Air Force is completely without basis and ignores the fundamental facts of the observation (Webb).

The Air Force didn't give up that easily. Donald Menzel, the Harvard astronomer who hated everything saucer, would explain that all of northern California was covered by temperature inversion (Menzel, 1963). This would explain, at least to many in the Air Force, these sightings. Planets and stars, refraction and temperature inversion were the culprits in these sightings. The Air Force finally labeled the case as solved by temperature inversion. Once there was a label, the Air Force believed it had fulfilled its function. Nothing more needed to be done.

The explanations, however, did not actually cover the descriptions provided by dozens of witnesses nor that many of them reported their sightings unaware that others were seeing similar things. If Scott and Carson, for example, had reported a bright light in the sky that remained in the distance and just moving around erratically in a small area, then the explanation would make sense. But with them reporting, officially, within hours of the sighting, the maneuvers made by the object and something more than just a bright light in the distance, temperature inversions and scintillating stars is an inadequate explanation.

The Red Bluff case, along with all the other sightings, deserved a better investigation than it received. Here was a chance to learn something important but by this time, the Air Force had little interest in actual investigations. It was explanations they desired.

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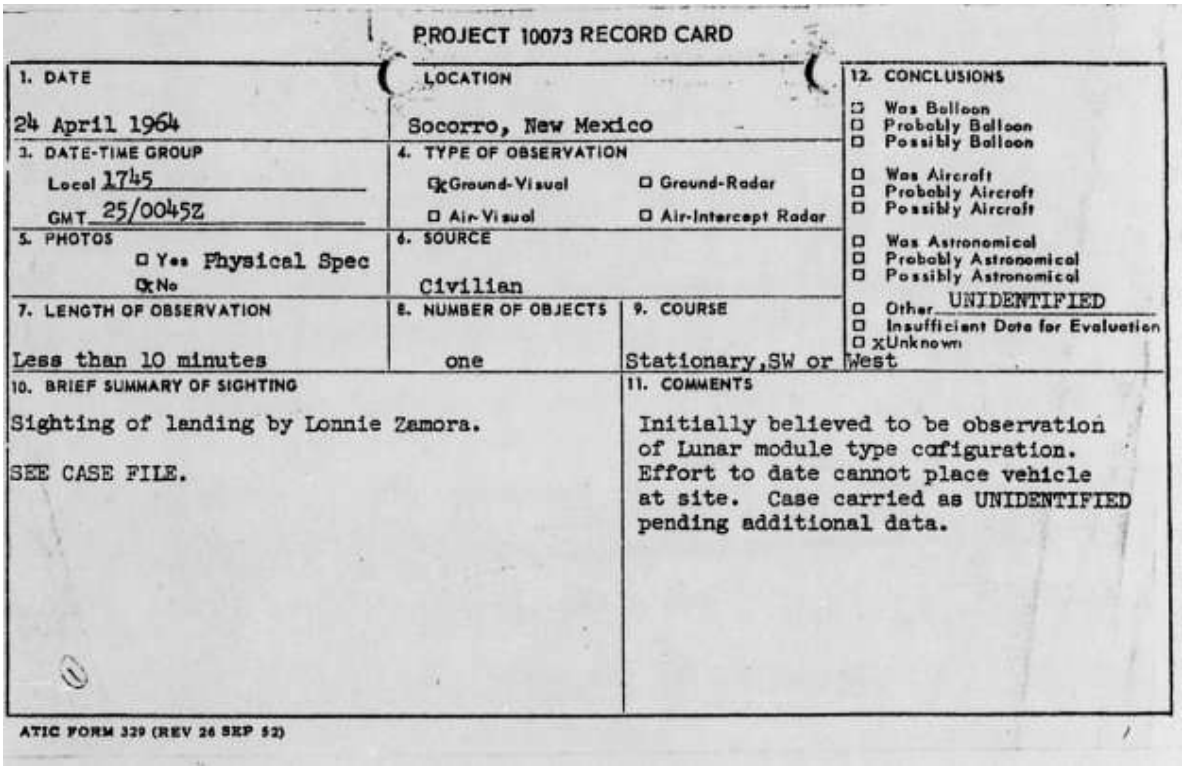
Chapter 10: April 24, 1964: Socorro, New Mexico



PROJECT 10073 RECORD CARD

1. DATE	LOCATION	12. CONCLUSIONS
24 April 1964	Socorro, New Mexico	☐ Was Balloon ☐ Probably Balloon ☐ Possibly Balloon
3. DATE-TIME GROUP Local 1745 GMT 25/0045Z	4. TYPE OF OBSERVATION ☒ Ground-Visual ☐ Ground-Radar ☐ Air-Visual ☐ Air-Intercept Radar	☐ Was Aircraft ☐ Probably Aircraft ☐ Possibly Aircraft
5. PHOTOS ☐ Yes Physical Spec ☒ No	6. SOURCE Civilian	☐ Was Astronomical ☐ Probably Astronomical ☐ Possibly Astronomical
7. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION Less than 10 minutes	8. NUMBER OF OBJECTS one	9. COURSE Stationary, SW or West
		☐ Other UNIDENTIFIED ☐ Insufficient Data for Evaluation ☐ xUnknown

10. BRIEF SUMMARY OF SIGHTING

Sighting of landing by Lonnie Zamora.

SEE CASE FILE.

11. COMMENTS

Initially believed to be observation of Lunar module type configuration. Effort to date cannot place vehicle at site. Case carried as UNIDENTIFIED pending additional data.

ATIC FORM 329 (REV 26 SEP 52)

Project Blue Book Project Card.

Although it was claimed that this was a single witness sighting, it turns out that there were three people who called the Socorro police to report something strange in the sky but the police officer who was on desk duty that day didn't bother to write down the names. These people were never identified, but there is documentation created within hours of the landing that confirms this claim. It is astonishing that no one, in the days after the sighting, tried to find one or more of these important witnesses.

As these calls were being made to the police station, Police officer Lonnie Zamora broke off his chase off a speeder when he too heard a roar coming from the edge of town. He thought that a dynamite shack there might have exploded. He headed in that direction. Out of the corner of his eye to the southwest he saw a blue flame which seemed to be descending but he didn't see an object over it. He lost sight of it as he drove up and down the gravel roads at the edge of the city.

Quickly, he drove off the road to a track across the scrub brush, attempted to climb the hill to a small mesa, backed off, tried again and finally a third time.
Lonnie Zamora.
He reached the top, drove across the mesa, then down, below him he saw what he thought was an overturned car. As he drove on, thinking this was a traffic accident, he saw two figures near the object. From his vantage point they appeared to be dressed in white coveralls. He thought they might be inspecting the object as if there had been some kind of trouble or looking for damage. He said, “The only time I saw these two persons was when I had stopped, for possibly two seconds… I don’t recall noting any particular shape or possibly hats, or headgear. These persons appeared normal in shape – but possibly they were small adults or large kids (Randle, 2018; Steiger, 1976; Blue Book).”

Zamora now believed that he was seeing people who were in trouble and began to drive toward them with the “idea to help” them. One of them, the closest to him, looked up, and seemed surprised that Zamora was there. That being disappeared around the object (Clark, 2019; Steiger, 1976; Blue Book).

Zamora drove down, into a dip and lost sight of the object momentarily. He radioed the dispatcher that he was at the scene of a traffic accident. He stopped his car again and got out, dropping the microphone which momentarily distracted him. He picked it up, put it back in the slot and then walked down toward the object.

Zamora heard a bang coming from behind the object. Commenting on the situation, in his official report, he wrote:

> After [I] fell by [the] car and [my] glasses fell off [I] kept running to north, with car between me and object. Glanced back a couple of times. Noted object begin to rise about level of car, about 20 to 25 feet guess – took, I guess about six seconds when object started to rise and I glanced back. I guess I ran about halfway to where I

ducked down, just over the edge of the hill. I guess I had run about 25 feet when I glanced back and saw the object about level with the car and it appeared directly over the place it rose from.

I was still running and I jumped just over the hill – I stopped because I did not hear the roar. I was scared of the roar, and I had planned to continue running down the hill. I turned around toward the object and at the same time put my head toward the ground, covering my face and arms. Being that there was no roar, I looked up, and I saw the object going away from me, in a southwest direction. When the roar stopped, heard a sharp tone whine from high tone to low tone. At the end of roar was this whine and the whine lasted maybe a second. Then there was complete silence about the object. That's when I lifted up my head and saw object going away from me. It did not come any closer to me. It appeared to go straight line and at same height – possibly 10 to 15 feet from the ground, and it cleared the dynamite shack by about 3 feet.

Shack about 8 feet high. Object was travelling very fast. It seemed to rise up, and take off immediately cross country. I ran back to my car and as I ran back I kept an eye on the object. I picked up my glasses… and into the car and radioed Nep Lopez, radio operator, to "look out of the window, to see if you can see an object." He asked, "What is it?" I answered, "It looks like a balloon." I don't know if he saw it. If Nep looked out his window, which faces north, he couldn't have seen it. I did not tell him at the moment which window to look out of.

As I was calling Nep, I could still see the object. The object seemed to lift up slowly, and to "get small" in the distance very fast. It seemed to just clear Box Canyon or Six Mile Canyon mountain. It disappeared as it went over the mountains. It had no flame whatsoever as it was traveling over the ground and made no smoke or noise…

Noted no orders. Noted no sound other than the described. Gave directions to Nep Lopez at radio and to Sgt. M.S. Chavez to get there. Went down to where the object was (had been), and I noted the bush was burning in several places. At that time, I heard Sgt. Chavez calling me on radio for my location, and I returned to my car, told him he was looking at me. Then Sgt. Chavez came up and asked me what the trouble was, because I was sweating and he told

me I was white, very pale. I asked the Sergeant to see what I saw, and that was the burning bush. Then Sgt. Chavez and I went to the spot, and Sgt. Chavez pointed out the tracks (Clark, 2018, Steiger, 1974, Blue Book).

Zamora also said that the blue flame that had shot from the craft as it lifted off, was now much longer than it had been. The roar ended, replaced by a high-pitched whining sound.

Zamora alerted his friend, Sergeant Sam Chavez of the New Mexico State Police. Zamora asked Chavez to come out to the landing site. He wanted to confer with his friend before he said anything else to anyone else. While he was waiting for Chavez, on a scrap of paper, he drew the symbol he had seen on the side of the craft. It was red and about two feet wide. He'd gotten a good look at

Sergeant Sam Chavez

it. Later, this would become a source of controversy that had little to do with Zamora himself, but quite a bit to do with the politics inside the UFO field.

Chavez arrived in a matter of minutes. Zamora thought that the object was still in sight, just barely, but Chavez would always insist that he didn't see it. Instead he noticed that Zamora was pale, looking as if he had seen something unholy ("UAO Landing"; Stanford 1976).

Together they walked down to the point where the object had landed. The ground was still smoking. Clumps of grass and a stubby mesquite bush showed signs of having been burned. The bush might have been smoking as well, the files are unclear on this point (Blue Book).

There were also four wedge-shaped marks on the ground that were three to four inches deep, arranged in an uneven rectangle. The uneven terrain might have accounted for the asymmetrical arrange of the landing

gear markings. Philip Klass would later point to this as proof that the landing claim was a hoax.

Landing gear impression.

Zamora and Chavez also found four circular depressions that were about 4½ inches in diameter and about three inches deep. These were not far from one of the wedge-shaped depressions. The Socorro newspaper, the *El Defensor-Chieftain*, reported, “They did not appear to be made by an object striking the earth with great force, but by an object of considerable weight settling to earth at slow speed and not moving after touching the ground. ”Minutes after Chavez arrived, State Police Senior Patrolman Ted V. Jordan showed up. He was joined by Undersheriff James Luckie and cattle inspector Robert

White

Chavez and others on the landing site.

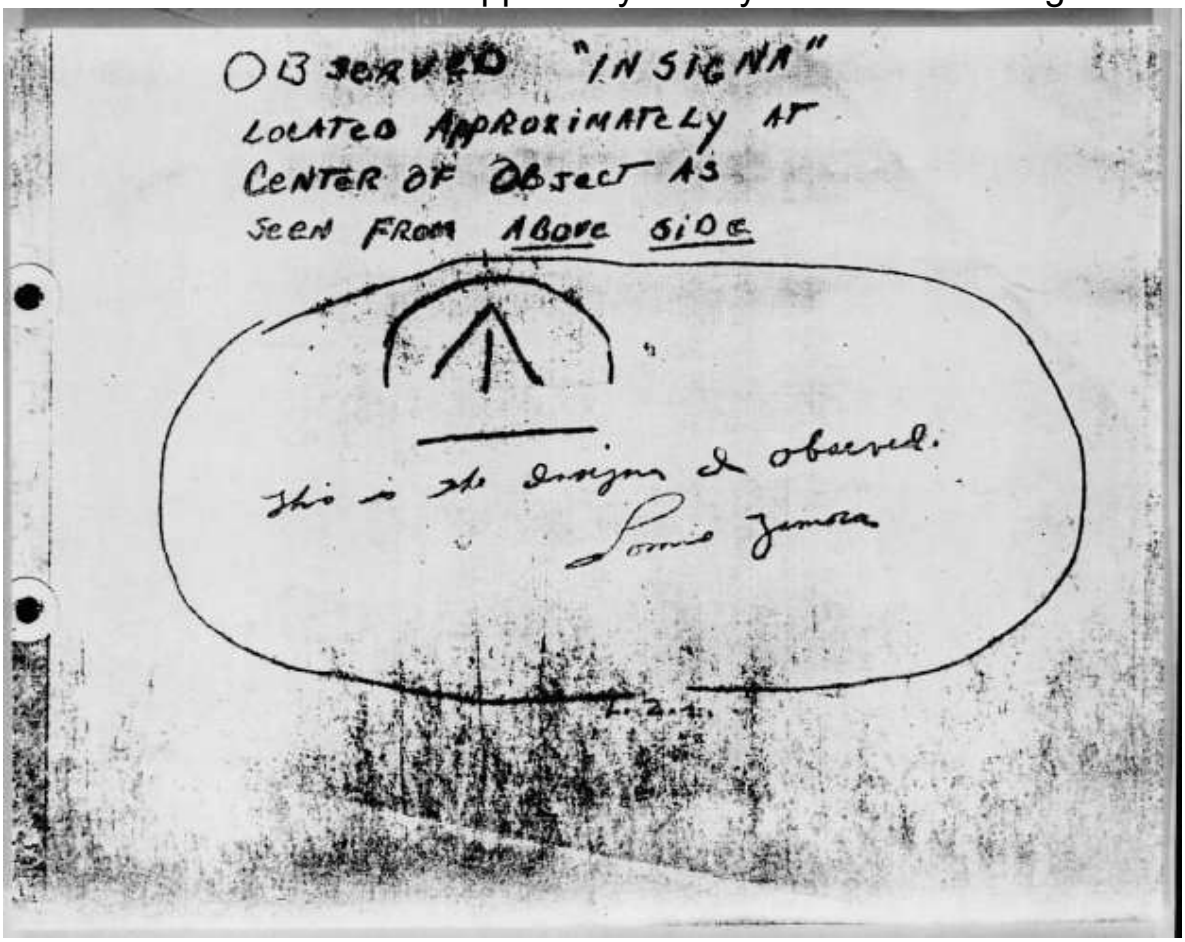
and had driven out to see the site for themselves. Jordan had his camera and took pictures of the landing area while it was still light enough to see. About

7:00 p.m. everyone left with Chavez and Zamora going back to the police station.

At this point, with Zamora and Chavez no longer on the site, there is another, unimportant controversy. According to Coral Lorenzen, writing in, *The A.P.R.O. Bulletin* of May 1964, Chavez called Captain Richard T. Holder, an Army officer who worked at the White Sands Missile Range. His duty station was closer to Socorro than it was to Alamogordo, so he lived in Socorro. Holder either called FBI agent Arthur Byrnes, or had one of his officers call him.

According to other sources, Chavez called Byrnes and Byrnes alerted Holder. Today that doesn't matter because both men drove to the Socorro Police Department, arriving within minutes of one another. However, it happened, Holder and Byrnes were the first two government officials to arrive on the scene with the exception of other members of the local Socorro law enforcement agencies.

Both men wanted to see the other's credentials. Satisfied that each was who he said he was, Byrnes then introduced Holder to Zamora. They both questioned Zamora about what he had seen searching for the smallest detail in what was apparently a fairly extensive interrogation.



Lonnie Zamora drew and signed this illustration of the insignia on the craft.

During the questioning, Zamora, of course, mentioned the beings that he had seen and the insignia on the side of the vehicle. Byrnes suggested that it might be wise not to mention the creatures. The newspapers and some of the people who heard about it might ridicule of him for that and it was just something that could be avoided. Holder said that they should withhold the description of the symbol as well but for different reasons. He thought that if others came forward to describe the scene, investigators would be able to tell if the story was legitimate if that new witness could describe the symbol correctly. It seems that many who would be in and out of the investigation in the next couple of days thought it was a good idea as well. The suggestion that this was an

attempt to suppress the information is not accurate (Stanford 1976; “UAO Landing”; Blue Book).

It was sometime after this that Holder called for military police from White Sands to cordon the area. Using their flashlights, they made measurements and collected some samples as well as creating the cordon. Holder, according to Jerome Clark, said, “I saw rocks that were normal on one side and charred on the other. There were bushes alive on one said, but when you’d touch them, the other side would flake to ash. When an object blasts off by rocket or jet propulsion, there’s usually damage or debris in the area. But there was no indication of that type of disturbance (Clark, 2018).”

That wasn’t all that happened that night. Once Holder and Byrnes finished interviewing Zamora and Chavez, they all returned to the landing site. According to Ray Stanford, the NICAP investigator who arrived several days later, Byrnes and Holder rode in the same car and they picked up Sergeant Castle, the NCOIC of the military police unit that Holder had called. Once on the scene, Byrnes suggested they protect the landing gear imprints by surrounding them with rocks (Stanford, 1976).

One of the impressions protected by rocks.

While they were working to preserve the evidence, they found additional imprints. These were not as large or as deep as those made by the landing gear. One set was inside the perimeter set by the landing gear and were roughly circular in shape. These were, of course the same

indentations that would be mentioned in the local newspaper. Speculation, given the location, size, and depth of these indentations, was that they were made by some sort of ladder. Zamora didn't report a ladder, but it would have been hidden behind the craft out of his line of sight.

The other set of impressions were five feet south of one of the landing gear indentations and outside the perimeter established by the gear. They were not well defined and according to Ted Jordan, seemed to have been made by a person or persons with relatively small feet. He said that one of them looked "like a heel print with the instep over a small clump of grass."

Stanford wrote, "All of those to whom I talked regarding them [the "footprints"], who would venture an interpretation, felt that the group of soil indentations were shoeprints of two small humanoids Zamora had seen during his view from around 450 feet to the northwest (Stanford, 1976)."

The problem, however, was that several people had already been walking all over the landing site before the MPs managed to cordon it. First, of course, were Zamora and Chavez, then there had been other members of the local law enforcement community and one of them had been taking pictures. Finally, came the military, which attempted to preserve the scene but that might have already been too late. Human footprints were already obscuring some of the

Once the measurements were taken, and once the impressions had been protected by placing rocks around them, everyone returned to the police station. Holder said that he and Byrnes then completed their reports. Holder wrote, "By Request of the FBI, please do not refer to the FBI as participating in any fashion – use of local law enforcement authorities is acceptable (Blue Book)." This is a tactic that the FBI had used from the very beginning of the modern UFO era. They participated in the investigations, but asked that other government officials not mention it (See Chapter 3).

Unfortunately for everyone, the next day the story was out nationally. Holder would later say that he had received a telephone call from a colonel who said that he was in the Joint Chiefs of Staff war room in the Pentagon, who wanted to know if he, Holder, had prepared a report on the sighting. Instructed to read his report into the telephone, which had a "scrambler" attached, he had just begun when the connection was

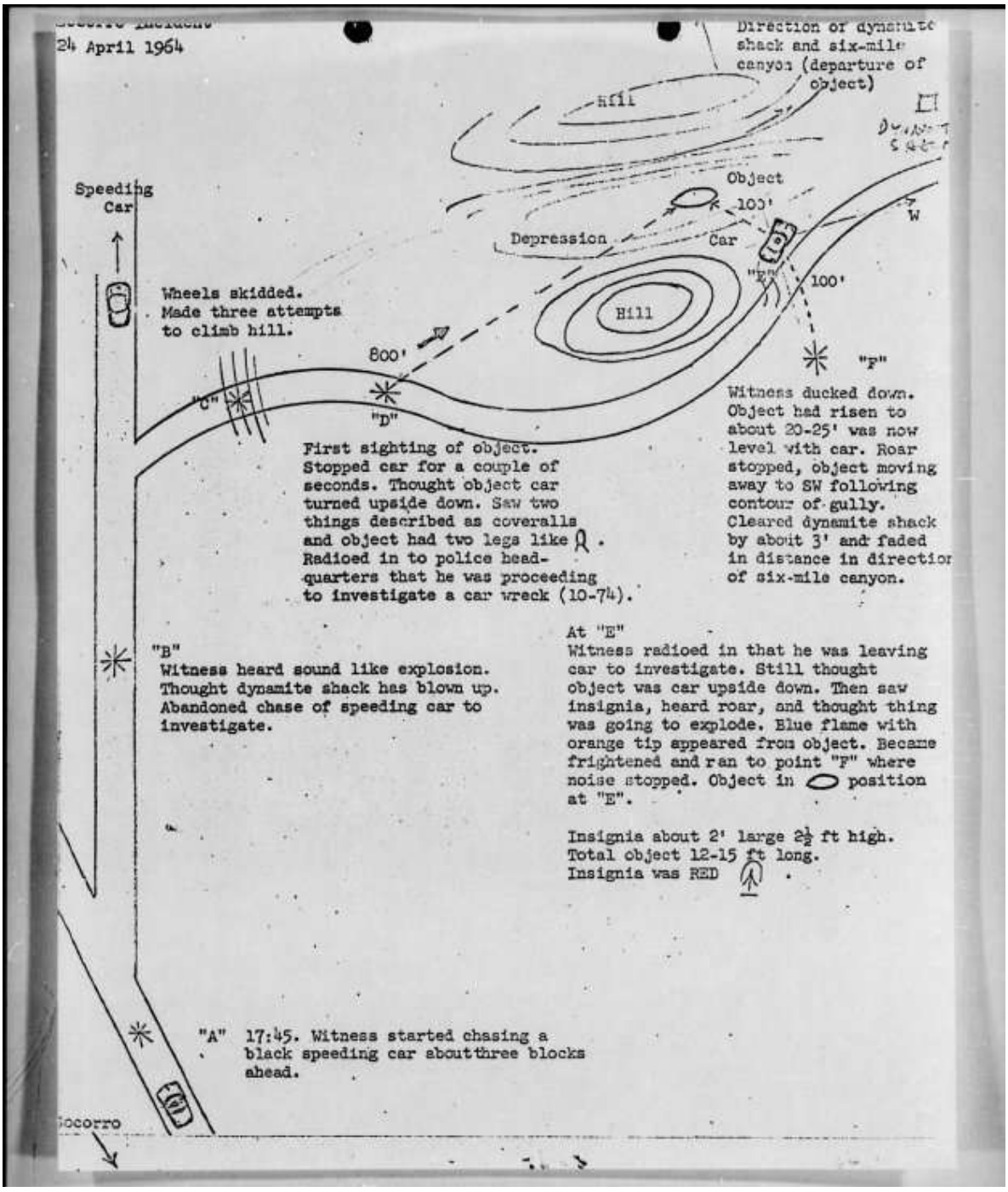
broken. Holder then called the war room, talked to the same officer, and finished reading his report. He often wondered, “Why in the world where they so interested? (Blue Book)”

Coral Lorenzen and APRO in Tucson, Arizona, learned of the sighting on the morning of April 25, when Arlynn Bruer of the *Alamogordo News* called for a comment. Although Coral and Jim Lorenzen had plans and commitments for that day, they managed to make other arrangements and to leave Tucson at five that evening, arriving in Socorro about one the next morning. By 9:00 a.m., they were at the Socorro Police Department. Within the hour they were being taken to the landing site by Chavez and Socorro Chief of Police Pineda (UAO Landing, 1964).

Chavez explained everything to the Lorenzens, answering all their questions and helping to make measurements for them. The Lorenzens took samples from the bush that had been partially burned, the burned ground and even from inside one of the indentations. That finished, they returned to the police station and called Zamora. He agreed to meet them that afternoon.

Their interview with Zamora didn’t go quite as well as those with the other police officers. He was reluctant to talk but after Jim Lorenzen said

that his


24 April 1964
Direction of dynamite shack and six-mile canyon (departure of object)
Hill
Speeding Car
Object
100'
Depression
Car
"E"
100'
W
Hill
Wheels skidded. Made three attempts to climb hill.
800'
"C"
"D"
"F"
Witness ducked down. Object had risen to about 20-25' was now level with car. Roar stopped, object moving away to SW following contour of gully. Cleared dynamite shack by about 3' and faded in distance in direction of six-mile canyon.
First sighting of object. Stopped car for a couple of seconds. Thought object car turned upside down. Saw two things described as coveralls and object had two legs like . Radioed in to police headquarters that he was proceeding to investigate a car wreck (10-74).
"B"
Witness heard sound like explosion. Thought dynamite shack has blown up. Abandoned chase of speeding car to investigate.
At "E"
Witness radioed in that he was leaving car to investigate. Still thought object was car upside down. Then saw insignia, heard roar, and thought thing was going to explode. Blue flame with orange tip appeared from object. Became frightened and ran to point "F" where noise stopped. Object in position at "E".
Insignia about 2' large 2½ ft high.
Total object 12-15 ft long.
Insignia was RED
"A" 17:45. Witness started chasing a black speeding car about three blocks ahead.
Socorro
Blue Book map the landing area.

questions would only take a few minutes, they all, which included the Lorenzens, Zamora, Luckie and a reporter from the newspaper, went into the chief's office for a little privacy.

Zamora then explained, again, what he had seen and how he had reacted. He did tell the Lorenzens that he hadn't seen any "little men." Coral Lorenzen pointed out that he had already told reporters about that and his descriptions of them had been reported on the radio and in the newspapers around the country. Zamora then admitted that he had seen two figures that he thought of as young boys or small adults standing near the craft. He said that he could make out no features on them other than he thought of them as little people.

The Lorenzens then asked about the markings on the craft and Zamora said that he had been told by an intelligence officer not to talk about it. He identified the officer as Holder who was not an intelligence officer but was assigned to White Sands. Jim Lorenzen called Holder who confirmed that he had made the suggestion as a way of identifying others who might have seen the same thing and rejecting those who were making up a sighting for personal reasons or publicity. The Lorenzens thought that this was a good idea. However, in the May 1964 of *The A.P.R.O Bulletin*, they printed an illustration that had the correct symbol on it. To confuse the issue, they also published an illustration that contained a different symbol that has elements of the arc over an arrow head, but with lines on the sides and bottom that make it look as if the symbol is in a modified oblong.

Coral Lorenzen also reported that she had talked to Terry Clarke who told them that the FBI man, that is Byrnes, had told Zamora not to talk to newsmen about the little men. Zamora was told that it might detract from his report. Lorenzen thought that this marked an attempt at censorship and that Zamora had then retreated to the claim that he had only seen what he described as "white coveralls" without seeing anything else.

Although the Lorenzens managed to hear about the creatures, Zamora denied having said anything about little people. The *Albuquerque Journal* reported, "UFO Witness Sighs At Reports of What He Supposedly Said." The newspaper also said, "Won't Tell Soul Next Time." In the body of the article, it said, "Zamora denies he had seen any little creatures around the object…"

In their investigation, the Lorenzens gathered some additional facts about the craft and the landing that matched those collected by others the day before. Coral Lorenzen wrote:

> The girder-like legs described by Zamora appeared to him to be 2 – 2½ feet long… In reference to those "landing gear" – the tracks

reveal that the object came down, gear extended to support it in a level position, and the “humping” of dirt on the outside of the tracks indicate that it was probably mounted a little with the landing and then displaced when the gear were withdrawn when the object took off.

During the week following the Zamora incident, Socorro was literally overrun with UFO researchers as well as official investigators including Dr. J. Allen Hynek, the Air Force’s Astrophysics Consultant. Lincoln La Paz, the famed meteoriticist of Albuquerque, made a statement or two in the press, as usual, and endorsed Zamora’s reputation as an honest and reliable man. He had known Zamora for about 15 years. Hynek stated publicly his puzzlement concerning the fact that the Zamora object as well as other objects sighted in the area, were not picked up by radar, despite the fact that the area is literally “infested” with radar (“UAO Landing”).

Lorenzen did respond to Hynek’s comment about the lack of radar confirmation. She wrote that the closest radar facility was at the Stallion Site. Holder was the man in charge there and he said that the radars had been shut down by 5:00 p.m. on that Friday because nothing was scheduled that would require radar. She also suggested that other radars in the area, controlled by the Air Force or the FAA, for example, would have not “painted” the UFO because of its low altitude. The terrain and the

Dr. J. Allen Hynek.

distances to those other radars contributed to that problem. It would also seem that the development of stealth technology would suggest that large objects could fly through areas without producing a significant radar return and therefore be overlooked by radar operators. This could, of course, explain why there were some interesting sightings in which there was no evidence of them on radar.

T/Sgt. David Moody was also in Socorro on that Sunday when the Lorenzens got there, having arrived earlier that day. Moody was assigned to Project Blue Book and had conducted field investigations for the project for several years. Moody, along with Major William Conner, the Kirtland AFB public relations officer, who has also been identified as the local UFO officer, had checked the landing site for radiation but didn't

Sergeant Moody and Major Connor on the landing site.

find any evidence of that. They apparently also attempted to find radar confirmation of the object but failed there as well (Lorenzen, 1964; Blue Book).

Dr. J. Allen Hynek didn't arrive in Socorro until Tuesday evening, April 28, after being alerted by the chief of Project Blue Book, the Captain Hector Quintanilla. Once in Socorro, he had the opportunity to interview Zamora and Chavez late in that evening. They all made plans for a reenactment of the events the next day. Hynek would later report that the

area had been trampled by tourists, sightseers, reporters and a host of others. He said, “The area certainly has been thoroughly messed up by tourists. There’s nothing to see there now (Clark, 2019).”

But it seems that all was not well with Hynek and the police officers in Socorro which might explain some of his later trouble. According to a memo Hynek wrote on May 20, 1964:

> Found Zamora & Chavez were very anti-AF. I got rid of the AF people & got the story from them that night at the jail. (A slow process – they were not eager to talk at first.) The next morning we went & reenacted it at the spot. A NICAP person (Ray Stanford) was already there & and lent me some bottles for taking specimens. I had brought nothing.
>
> Z. is an unimaginative cop of an old Socorro family, incapable of hoax, and pretty sore at being regarded as a romancer. It took at least ½ an hour to thaw him out…
>
> The marks left on the ground: 4 rectangular scrapings as if a rectangular object had scraped along digging into the ground – deeper at the end. The gouging was done away from the center in every case. The arrangement was not regular, but the diagonals were perfectly at right angles (Blue Book).

Ray Stanford, who at the time lived in Phoenix, Arizona, also arrived late on that Tuesday, much later than Hynek. He had talked to Zamora at some point prior to that, probably before he left Phoenix. Early on Wednesday morning, he called Zamora at home only to be told that Zamora was still asleep. He called again about thirty minutes later and was told that Zamora was unavailable. Stanford finally just drove to the police station to try to find him (Stanford, 1976).

Sergeant Chavez studying the burned bush.

Zamora wasn't there. Stanford talked to the morning dispatcher, Mike Martinez, and was told that Zamora had seen two figures in white and that one had turned toward him and "sorta jumped." Martinez also said that Zamora was to the point that he didn't want to talk to anyone about what he had seen given his treatment by some of those who had interviewed him over the last several days and some of the things that he had seen in the newspapers. Reporters or Air Force personnel had been less than kind in their discussions with or about Zamora.

Stanford said that Zamora had promised to meet him and Martinez finally said that Zamora was on the south side of town with Chavez. Stanford pointed out that this could only mean one thing and asked that Martinez use his radio. Chavez answered the call but said they didn't want anyone else out there while Hynek was on the scene. Hynek apparently broke in and said to let Stanford come out, but that he was to come alone.

After Zamora pointed out where the object had come from, touched down, and then left, Hynek said that he wanted to find some of the paper or other material had been burned by the craft. The only paper in the area looked as if it had been outside for a very long time and had nothing to do with the UFO. Both Chavez and Zamora mentioned that the curiosity seekers and other tourists had cleaned the site of anything useful that had been there. This means, of course, by the time Hynek arrived in his capacity as the Project Blue Book scientific consultant and

Stanford arrived as the NICAP representative, much that might have been useful in the investigation had been taken away.

Stanford listened as Hynek asked additional questions. Stanford wondered if the landing gear marks might not have been created by prospectors. Zamora said that they corresponded to the locations that he had seen the landing gear touch down.

Later that day, Stanford met Walter Shrode, a radio reporter for dinner. It was during this dinner that Stanford was introduced to the two women who heard the UFO on April 24. This could have been an important lead that no one ever pursued. Two witnesses to some portions of the sighting who shared their stories with a reporter and a UFO investigator, who then seemed to ignore it. More than fifty years later, there was no way to trace the women without their names or a few other clues. Although Stanford thought he might have written the names down, that information was lost in the notes stashed with hundreds of other UFO investigations. In other words, he wasn't sure where the names might be and didn't think there was anything that could be done to locate the witnesses at this late date.

On Thursday Stanford was finally able to personally interview Zamora. The first thing he asked was about the press conference the day before. He said that Hynek had told the reporter that Zamora had not been told by anyone to hide the information about the symbol he had seen.

According to Stanford, Zamora's response was emphatic. "No! I didn't tell him that (Stanford, 1976)."

Zamora then said the same thing that he had told the Lorenzens on Saturday. "Yes, I'd say someone told me it would be best if I don't tell about the shape on the side…"

But then Zamora seemed reluctant to answer any questions about the sighting, not even telling Stanford the shape of the craft which had already been widely reported. Zamora said that they might not want him to say anything about that.

The "they" in all this is probably Byrnes and Holder though neither had any real authority to stop Zamora from talking to anyone about the landing.

TDEW

UFO Sighting, Socorro, New Mexico, 24 Apr 64 13 May 64

Hq USAF SAFOI PB (Mrs Gaiser)
Wash 25 D C

1. The following is a resume on the unidentified flying object sighted by Mr Lonnie Zamora, of Socorro, New Mexico.

a. At approximately 1745, 24 Apr 64, while giving chase to a car in Socorro, Mr Lonnie Zamora heard what he believed to be a roar and saw a flame in the sky to the southwest, approximately one half mile away. Mr Zamora, ~~who is~~ a policeman for the Socorro Police Department, believed that a dynamite shack in the area had blown up and decided to go to the shack and not pursue the speeding automobile.

b. Mr Zamora claims that the flame was bluish and sort of orange in color. However, he could not tell the size of the flame which was slowly descending. The flame was of a narrow type and streamed down into sort of a funnel shape. At this time he was still driving his car and did not pay too much attention.

c. Mr Zamora traveled slowly on the gravel road westward toward the object. He noted nothing for a while and he went slowly looking for the shack; he could not recall exactly where the shack was located. He suddenly noted to the south of his position a shiny object which was off the road. At first glance it appeared as a car upside down. He thought some kids might have turned it over. At this point he saw two people in white coveralls, quite close to the object. One of these persons seemed to stop and look straight at him and seemed startled. At this point Mr Zamora was traveling with the idea of helping them. The object was like aluminum-white, smooth, but not like chrome. Object was oval shape and at first glance appeared to look like an overturned white automobile. The only time that Mr Zamora saw the two people in white coveralls was when he stopped, probably two seconds or so. The two persons appeared to be normal in shape. At this point Mr Zamora proceeded towards the object and radioed the sheriff's office at Socorro of a possible accident. He informed the Socorro office that he would be busy and out of his car, checking the object.

One of the reports that appear in the Blue Book files.

d. Mr Zamora stopped his car while he was still talking on the radio and started to get out. He finished his conversation with the sheriff's office and proceeded towards where the object was. He then heard a roar, a very loud roar but not like a jet, which was of low frequency and then rose in frequency and very very loud. At the same time that the roar was heard he saw a flame. The flame was under the object. Object started to go straight up, slowly. Object rose slowly and flame was coming from the bottom. The color was light blue and sort of orange, but he saw no smoke. However, there was dust in the immediate area. As soon as Mr. Zamora saw the flame and heard the roar he turned and ran away from the object. He bumped his leg on the back fender of his auto, lost his glasses, fell to the ground, got up and proceeded away from the object for at least another 50 feet. He fell to the ground and covered himself like an ostrich, expecting the object to blow up. The roar lasted for a few seconds.

e. When there was complete silence, he lifted his head and saw the object going away from him. The object appeared to go straight up to an altitude of 15 feet and proceed slowly towards the dynamite shack where it cleared the shack by what appeared to be three feet. Object traveled six miles in three minutes.

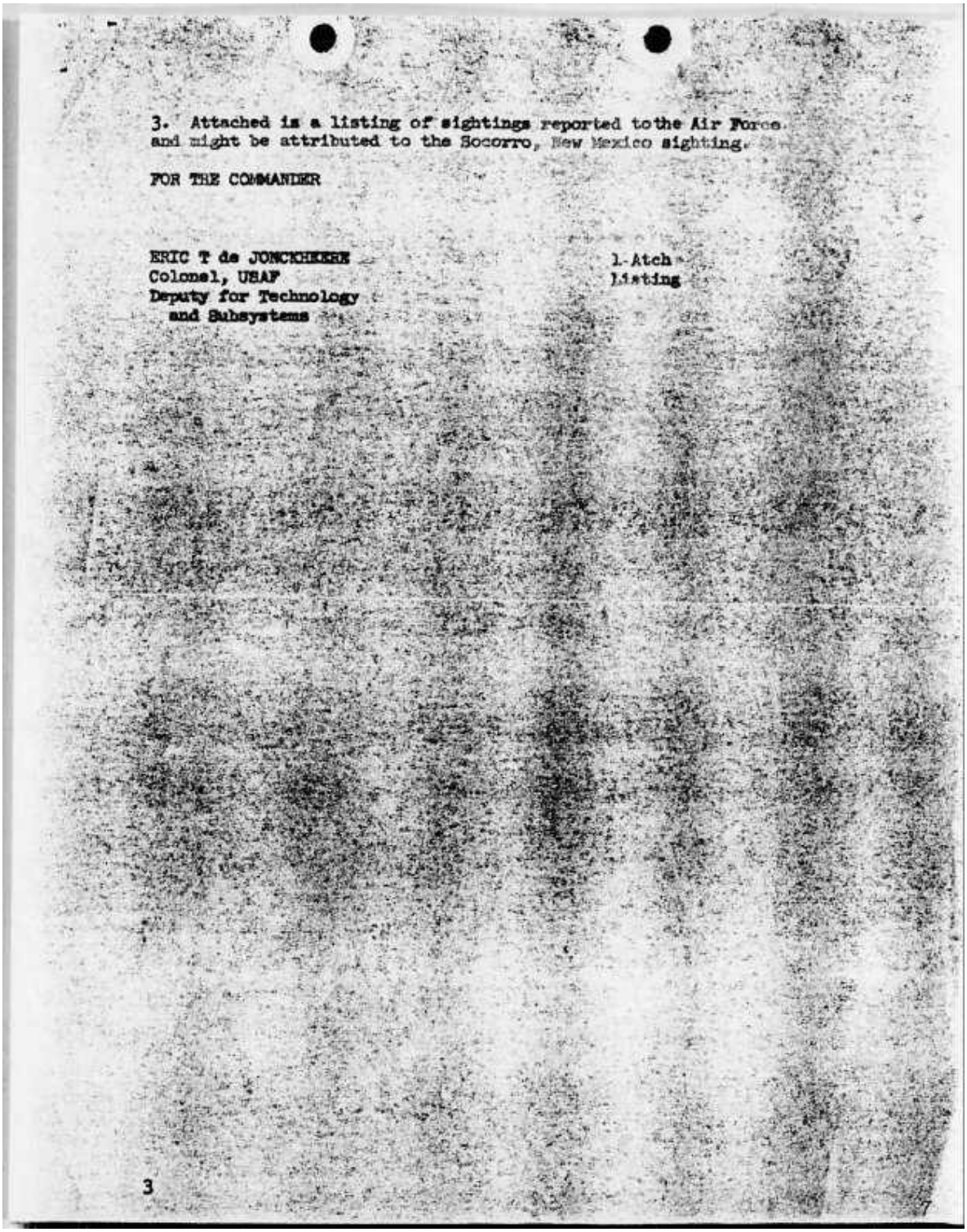
f. Mr Zamora went back to his car and asked the radio operator at the station to look out the window and see if he could spot the object. The radio operator failed to spot the object because he was facing North and could not see the object from this angle.

g. Mr Zamora claims that the object had no flame whatsoever as it was flying over the ground and he could see no smoke.

h. After the object had left the area, Sgt Chaves, of the New Mexico State Patrol, arrived at the scene. Sgt Chaves claims that Mr Zamora was perspiring and very white, very pale. Sgt Chaves and Mr Zamora saw a burning brush and proceeded to the spot where the object had first been seen.

i. Mr Zamora claims that the object had two legs slanted outwards, towards the ground and he also claims that he distinctly heard two or three loud thumps, like someone possibly shutting or opening a door.

2. It is my belief that Mr Zamora is telling the truth and that he did in fact see a man made object which probably belongs to one of the services. There is no indication that this vehicle which Mr Zamora saw came from outer space, now or ever.



3. Attached is a listing of sightings reported to the Air Force and might be attributed to the Socorro, New Mexico sighting.

FOR THE COMMANDER

ERIC T de JONCKHEERE
Colonel, USAF
Deputy for Technology
and Subsystems

1-Atch
Listing

3

What is more likely here, given some of the things that Zamora had said previously and things he would say later is that he was tired of answering questions from any number of people and he was tired of the whole affair, sorry sighting. He especially tired of the news media and the

Air Force. He wished he had never said anything to anyone about the sighting and wished it would just go away.

Stanford didn't have much more time in Socorro. But before he could leave, one of the other members of the police force, holding a copy of the *Albuquerque Journal*, said that Hynek had called Zamora a liar by saying that no one in the Air Force had told him not to talk about the sighting. Stanford pointed out that those who had suggested that Zamora withhold details weren't in the Air Force, but in the Army and FBI. But he added that in the press conference the day before, Hynek had not qualified his statement in anyway. This was a technicality at best, but it made no real difference to the police officers working in Socorro.

Although the police officer had said that Hynek had better not return to town because he "might get his butt chased right back out," Hynek did return on August 15. He told those in Socorro that he was traveling from Las Cruces, New Mexico, to Boulder, Colorado, on some sort of inspection of observatories. Since the route took him through Socorro, he decided to stop to ask a few additional questions about the sighting. The observatory story was a cover story for his reappearance in Socorro.

According to Hynek's report, "Socorro Revisited," the object of his visit was to "obtain an overview of the feelings and opinions about the Zamora sighting of April 24th, after several months had passed, and to find out if the principals had any afterthoughts or changes which they wished to make to their story, how they were now regarded by the townsfolk [sic], and what if any was the official opinion (Blue Book)."

There is nothing new in the report. Hynek reinterviewed a number of local residents who said that Zamora was a reliable source and that they believed him to be telling the truth about the sighting. Hynek wrote, "Although I made a distinct attempt to find a chink in Zamora's armor, I simply couldn't find anyone with the possible exception of a Mr. Philips who has a house fairly near the site of the original sighting, who did anything but completely uphold Zamora's character and reliability, and I again talked with people who had known him since childhood."

Hynek visited the landing site again and saw that the indentations were still visible even after several months. He talked to various participants in the sighting and aftermath, but didn't seem to conduct any real interviews. He noted that Holder "is still quite enthusiastic and really fairly enamored of the idea of strange crafts."

Hynek did make one stop that could have relevance to later enquiries about the landing. He wrote, “Before we left, we called Dr. Wartman, the retiring president of the New Mexico School of Mine’s [sic], who had nothing further to offer. Before our visit with Captain Holder, on coming back from the site, we visited a Mr. Philips who lives fairly close to the site of the alleged landing. Mr. Philips had been in his back yard just over the hill from the sighting place, and maintains that he heard no loud roar and has remained skeptical about the whole thing. He claimed that if there had been an explosion such as Zamora claims to have heard, he (Philips) certainly would have heard it. However, this does not necessary follow, because Zamora was directly downwind from the gully, there was a very strong southwest wind blowing, and the gully is on the opposite side of the hill from where Mr. Philips was listening… He was the only person we talked to, however, who tended to disbelieve Zamora’s veracity…”

Philip Klass, in his investigation of the Zamora sighting, placed great emphasis on the Philips tale. Klass interviewed him and verified that Philips had claimed to have seen and heard nothing unusual that night. Philips even claimed that he walked up to the landing site but had seen nothing. For Klass, that was enough. He didn’t ask much in the way of follow up. He didn’t wonder why Philips would have walked up there if nothing was happening. Klass didn’t seem to wonder why, since someone had been on the scene from the time that Zamora arrived until late that night, Philips had not seen any of them.

Hynek returned to Socorro in March, 1965, but the trip was a replay of his last one. He talked to a number of people but learned nothing that had not been in his earlier “Socorro Revisited,” report (Blue Book).

The official Air Force investigations had ended with Hynek’s last visit to Socorro. There had been civilian research conducted by the Lorenzens and Ray Stanford. In the years that followed, others took an interest in the case but there was no additional intensive investigation until the early 21st century when Ben Moss and Tony Angiola decided to see if they could learn anything new about the landing.

They did interview Ray Stanford who told them that Chavez had arrived in time to see the object in the sky. Then Stanford added that he hadn’t learned that from Chavez himself but every member of the Socorro law enforcement establishment he talked to said that Chavez saw the object. This, unfortunately, has not been corroborated.

Moss and Angiola also talked about the symbol seen on the side of the craft and suggested reasons that the case wasn't a hoax. Using unofficial Project Blue Book files that Rob Mercer had located, radio and television footage about the case, and their interviews with Stanford, they concluded, as did those with

Rick Baca's illustration made from Zamora's description.

Blue Book, that there is no terrestrial object of any project that would account for the sighting. That is the way it has been for more than half a century.

Here's where we are on this. Had so many people not been pushing so many agendas and had the media and some of the investigators not treated Zamora with such distain, this case might have been just what Allen Hynek feared in 1964. In a report on his Socorro trip, he wrote, "No doubt was left in my mind but that NICAP and APRO, and possibly others, would consider this the best authenticated landing sighting on record. They will use it, very likely as a lever for a congressional investigation, and will deride any attempt to 'explain it away' as a balloon, conventional helicopter, etc. ... (Blue Book)."

Reading between the lines here, this suggests that Hynek was confounded by the landing, the witnesses and the evidence. He had no explanation for it and that seemed to have worried him greatly. This was prior to his conversion from a skeptic into a believer. At this point, he still considered the idea of alien visitation as unlikely and he was on board with the Air Force mission of solving all sightings with conventional explanations.

Hector Quintanilla, chief of Project Blue Book, was under pressure to provide a terrestrial answer. In the unpublished memoir of his activities at Blue Book, he wrote, “I was determined to solve the case and come hell or high water I was going to find the vehicle or stimulus.”

He reported that he had authority to review all the classified research programs at Holloman Air Force Base in Alamogordo that might have provided an explanation unavailable to those not cleared for top secret information. After four days of interviews, he found nothing to explain the sighting. He thought about the Lunar Lander then under development, but the briefings he had on that project showed that it was not operational in April 1964 and therefore was not a viable solution.

Eventually Quintanilla decided that it was time for him to pass judgement on the case. He wrote:

> I labeled the case “Unidentified” and the UFO buffs and hobby clubs had themselves a field day. According to them, here was proof that our beloved planet had been visited by an extraterrestrial vehicle. Although I labeled the case “Unidentified” I’ve never been satisfied with that classification. I’ve always felt that too many essential elements of the case were missing. There are the intangible elements which are impossible to check, so the solution to the case could very well be lying dormant in Lonnie Zamora’s head.

But again, as the chief of Blue Book, charged with investigating the case, he was unable to provide a plausible explanation for it. Instead, he insisted that the solution was with Zamora but offered nothing to suggest what that solution might be, or what essential element the investigators of the case had failed to find. He thought the explanation could be found with something that Zamora saw or believed, but Zamora never revealed it.

What this means is that the Air Force through Project Blue Book and through its consultant and investigators found nothing to explain what Zamora had seen. They found no secret project located at Holloman or

White Sands that would explain the sighting. Searches of the various defense contractors and other research organizations provided no answer. Documentation of the military activities at Holloman, White Sands Missile Range, and Kirtland that included their classified projects that are no longer classified, provide no answer. In fact, Quintanilla had queried the White House Command Post in 1964 and was told that the only thing they had going on were U-2 flights which obviously weren't the answer.

Hynek, during his trip to Socorro had spoken to a colleague, the president of the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology and was told that they had nothing that would have been in the area and that the students were not responsible as had been alleged. The landing was not a student hoax.

The bottom line on this is that, as in so many other UFO cases, the personalities, the agendas of so many organizations both civilian, military and government, and feuding that went on has taken precedence over the investigation. It seems, in the very beginning, that the New Mexican law enforcement officers involved, the military officers and the FBI agent, all had a common goal, which was figure out what had landed. The area was cordoned off, samples were taken and Zamora interviewed by professionals. But almost before the sun was up, the story was out, and everyone else headed to Socorro with their own agendas seeking to reinforce their belief structures.

Had the investigation continued in a professional manner, had the news media not jumped into the report with their many sensational claims, and had some of the civilian researchers stayed out of the way, then we might have some interesting answers. Metallic residue was lost through clumsy handling, soil samples taken by so many revealed nothing extraordinary, and the plants revealed no sign of having been burnt by any chemical process.

Today, we know that the case is not a single witness, we know that landing traces were left behind, and no Earthly explanation has been offered. We are left with a case that is interesting, has evidence other than witness testimony and has not been explained. It is, in the truest sense of the word, "Unidentified." We don't know what it was, but we know what it wasn't and while that does not take us immediately to the extraterrestrial, it gets us very close to it. This is one of the defining

cases of UFO history and it deserved better than it got. It is the very definition of Unidentified.

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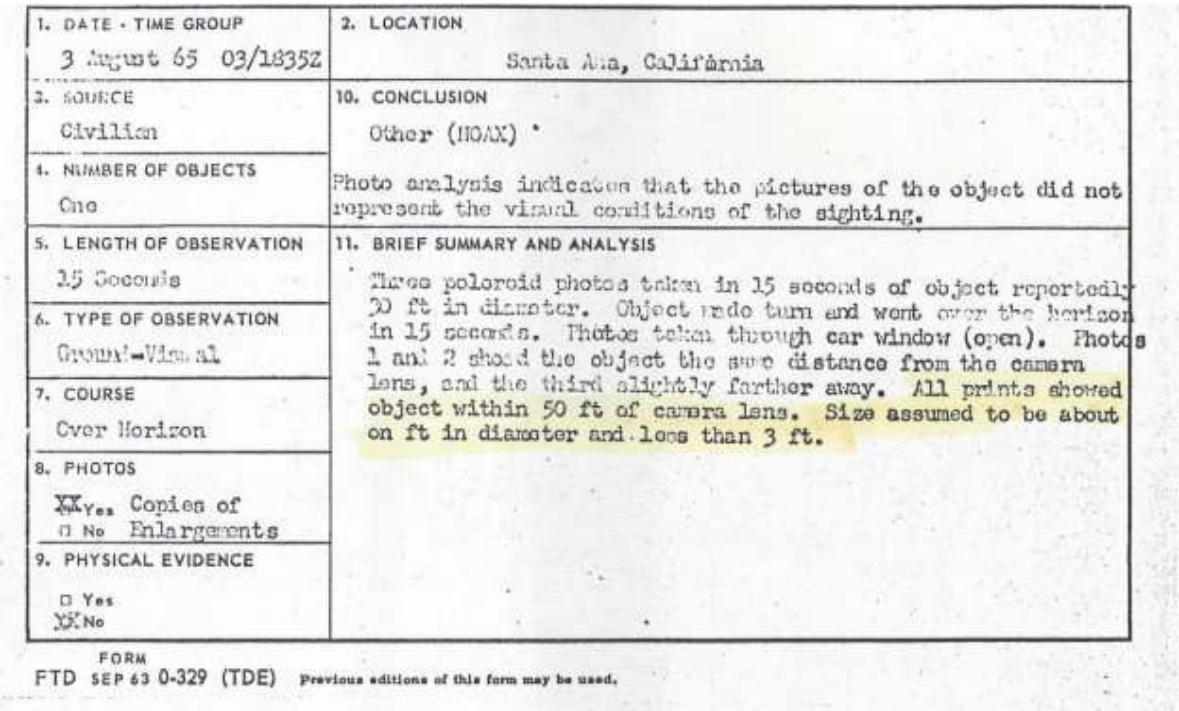
Chapter 11: The Heflin Photographs, August 3, 1965



1. DATE - TIME GROUP	2. LOCATION
3 August 65 03/1835Z	Santa Ana, California
3. SOURCE: Civilian	10. CONCLUSION: Other (HOAX) *
4. NUMBER OF OBJECTS: One	Photo analysis indicates that the pictures of the object did not represent the visual conditions of the sighting.
5. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION: 15 Seconds	11. BRIEF SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: Three poloroid photos taken in 15 seconds of object reportedly 30 ft in diameter. Object made turn and went over the horizon in 15 seconds. Photos taken through car window (open). Photos 1 and 2 showed the object the same distance from the camera lens, and the third slightly farther away. All prints showed object within 50 ft of camera lens. Size assumed to be about on ft in diameter and less than 3 ft.
6. TYPE OF OBSERVATION: Ground-Visual	
7. COURSE: Over Horizon	
8. PHOTOS: XX Yes Copies of ☐ No Enlargements	
9. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE: ☐ Yes XX No	

FORM FTD SEP 63 0-329 (TDE) Previous editions of this form may be used.

Project Blue Book Project Card.

The pictures taken by Rex Heflin on August 3, 1965 were labeled a hoax by the Air Force, and by some of the skeptics, almost immediately. They based their conclusion on their preliminary examination of the pictures made only from copies that had been printed in the newspaper rather than on an analysis of the negatives or, at the very least, from prints made from those negatives. They believed that the pictures were of a small model, about three feet in diameter, that had been suspended about twenty feet above the ground. Although many would engage in other, more lengthy investigations later, the Air Force would not alter its original assessment. The case is still carried as a hoax in the Project Blue Books files. But the case is more complicated than those early critics believed.

The story of Heflin's photographs as it appeared in the Project Blue Book files and gathered by Captain Charles F. Reichmuth stated:

> At approximately 1130 hours PDT on 3 August 1965, Mr Rex E Heflin was driving SSW on Myford Road to check out a matter (not

identified) pertaining to his job for the Orange County Road Department. After checking the item, he turned his vehicle (Ford "van bus") around and began to head NNE, still on Myford Road. He was still traveling at only a few MPH (three to ten) when he first observed something out of the corner of his eye, out of the left side window of the vehicle. At first he assumed that it was a helicopter until the object was almost directly in front of his vehicle. Because of the unusual shape of the object, Mr Heflin quickly stopped the vehicle and grabbed the Polaroid camera which was on the front seat (SOP for traffic investigators), and took one picture of the object through the windshield. (NOTE: Marine Corps investigators determined that the object was at a bearing of 10 degrees magnetic at the time of the photograph was taken.) The UFO continued an ESE course at slow speed. Mr Heflin was able to take two additional photographs of the UFO through the right door window of his vehicle. (NOTE: Marine Corps investigators estimate that the bearing of the UFO in picture nr 2 was about 90 degrees magnetic, and that the bearing of the UFO in picture nr 3 was about 70 degrees magnetic.) This would indicate that picture nr 3 was taken after the UFO had changed course to a NE heading.

Mr Heflin's comment to the Investigating Officer varied somewhat from those given to the Marine Corps investigator. However, it is believed that the undersigned conducted a more thorough investigation and that Mr Heflin's comments which are noted below are essentially correct. Mr Heflin state that he had attempted to use his two-way radio once or twice just before he sighted the UFO and could neither transmit nor receive any signal although the radio panel lights indicated that the radio was operational. Detailed questioning indicated that this definitely occurred before the UFO sighting and not during the UFO sighting. Mr Heflin stated that after the UFO and disappeared that he attempted to use his radio and found that it was working normally. He also stated that he had not had any other radio malfunctions in the preceding weeks.

Just after taking the third picture of the UFO, Mr Heflin heard a vehicle approaching from the rear. Concerned that he might have parked in an awkward position, he turned around to see if there was enough road clearance for the vehicle to pass him. Noting that he

was on the shoulder of the road, he immediately turned again to look at the UFO but found that it had "disappeared into the haze."

The Investigating Officer has noted some skeptism on the part of several individuals as to whether or not Mr Heflin could have observed the UFO, stopped his vehicle and taken three photographs - all in a 15 to 25 second time period. A check was made with people who are familiar with this particular model camera, and it was determined that an experience man could easily take three photographs within a 12 - second time period.

At the end of the working day, Mr Heflin returned to his office in the Road Department building and showed his photographs to several co-workers. They were subsequently filed in a desk drawer. After a few days (and after several duplicate photographs, conversations, comments, and general bull sessions), a friend of Mr Heflin who is a former employee of the Road Department convinced Mr Heflin that they should try to sell the photographs to LIFE Magazine. The friend was unidentified, however Mr Heflin's supervisor, Mr Kimmel, substantiated this bit of the story. The friend called the LIFE Magazine office in Chicago and was informed that they were interested. Subsequently, the friend mailed the pictures to the Los Angeles office and presumably the photographs were forwarded to the main office in New York (or Chicago?).

About two weeks later the photographs were returned from New York(?) directly to Mr Heflin without written comment. At about the same time the Los Angeles office telephoned Mr Heflin to say that the main office had declined to utilize the pictures "because it was too controversial at the time". Time passed and apparently more copies of the pictures were made and handed out to various friends and friends of friends, until most of Santa Ana was saturated with the UFO pictures.

One of these pictures was obtained by a druggist who then apparently showed it to a friend, a customer who worked for the Santa Ana Register. On or about 18 September, Frank Hall of the Santa Ana Register contacted Mr. Heflin, borrowed the three original prints, returned the originals to Mr Heflin and wrote an article which was published with the UFO picture) in the Santa Ana Register on 20 September 1965. Two of the three photographs were released by the Register on 20 or 21 September to UPI. One of both of these

pictures and accompanying articles were published by various newspapers on 21 September 1965.

There are additional points to be made here. Heflin apparently loaned the original prints to anyone who asked for copies of them. First, he gave them to the Marine officer who investigated the case and did not ask him for any sort of a receipt. The Marine quickly returned the originals. Then a man claiming to be an officer assigned to the North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) contacted Heflin. He was given the originals, again without receipt (Duffle, Reanalysis; Gillmor, 1969; Blue Book).

The Air Force tried to find out who the NORAD officer was but had no luck in doing so. Others noted that NORAD wouldn't be investigating UFOs and certainly wouldn't have taken the originals without making arrangements to return them. Air Force investigators suggested that because NORAD would not be routinely investigating, and because there was no evidence that such an investigation by NORAD had taken place, this was one reason to believe that Heflin's story was a hoax. They didn’t seem to consider the possibility that the man claiming to be from NORAD was an imposter. That would, of course, negate the explanation of hoax.

The Air Force report also dismissed the claims of interference with the truck's two-way radio, suggesting that the trouble began before the UFO appeared. Dr. James McDonald, who became interested in the photographs sometime later, interviewed Heflin about this aspect of the case. McDonald did confirm that there had been a radio malfunction and importantly that other vehicles in the area reported similar malfunctions. Heflin had been told about the system failure.

The first of the Heflin pictures.

Heflin's superiors noted that the failure was very odd. His superiors suggested that Heflin check out the radio, even though the radio worked perfectly once the UFO was out of sight.

According to a document created by McDonald, he believed "…quite conceivable that a strong [electromagnet] field at the same frequency as Heflin was calling out on could 'blank' the system because of the type of amplifier usually used in the first stage would simply block or saturate at very high receiver strength and transmit nothing at all." (Duffle, Reanalysis p. 591]

The last of the pictures of the object.

This, by itself, raised the “weirdness” of the case, but added a dimension of corroboration to the story. Heflin reported radio interference, and his superiors confirmed that such interference had been reported, not only by Heflin but others, at the time of the sighting.

Rex Heflin.

But there were other problems, at least according to some. Heflin's chronology and reports were also disputed. Air Force records suggest that the Air Force only became interested in the case after the public release of the photographs. Yet, in the Project Blue Book files, there is a report of the photo analysis of the pictures dated August 14, suggesting an Air Force investigation within two weeks of the event and before the public interest began.

The Condon Committee asked the Air Force about it and was told that the report's date was a typographical error. Air Force officers had noticed the problem earlier and had asked questions about it. No one explained why the date hadn't been corrected on the form when the error was noticed or why a notation about the inaccurate date hadn't been attached to the report. This

The Heflin Smoke Ring.

suggested something more sinister; but it also suggested something about the competence of the investigations.

With that question answered, to the satisfaction of the Condon Committee investigators, they began to pick apart Heflin's story based on exactly the same sort of errors detailed by the Air Force. For example, Hartmann said that in his original testimony about the NORAD visitors, Heflin had spoken about a single man. According to a September 25, 1965, report filed with NICAP, Heflin had said that "a man with a briefcase later called... and said he was... and that he would like to see... [Heflin] agreed to loan the pictures to him providing he would..."

Condon Committee investigators interviewed Heflin on January 15, 1968. They asked, "Why is it that you are now clear on there having been two NORAD visitors, while on the very next day the Air Force man came away with the idea that a man came up and flashed his card...?"

According to Hartmann, in the Condon Committee report, "He [Heflin] immediately replied in effect that only one man showed his card. He repeated that there were two men, in their early thirties, but that one stood back while the other did most of the talking. Since two independent reports from the next three days clearly indicate one visitor, while the

witness has since insisted there were two, the 'NORAD episode' is still regarded as open to serious question."

But this isn't a very important question. It can easily be explained as a simple mistake by Heflin or a misunderstanding by the initial investigators. Human memory is a very complex thing and there are changes and mutations in memory each time it is accessed. The importance attached to the number of men who appeared at Heflin's home is the same as the importance attached to the date of the Air Force photo analysis. It is a mistake that is insignificant and irrelevant to the overall picture. Analysis of the photographs should have taken primary importance in the investigation but it was the testimony of Heflin that was scrutinized in detail. There were, however, some early analyses of the pictures that could have been significant. First, is the misdated Air Force report, numbered 65-48. In paragraph 2, labeled analysis, it was reported, "Although it is not possible to disprove the size of the object from the camera information submitted and distances to the object quoted in the report by Mr. Rex E. Heflin, we feel that the following is the true case. The camera was probably focused on a set distance and not on road and the object center infinity, as the terrain background was blurred on all three photographs.

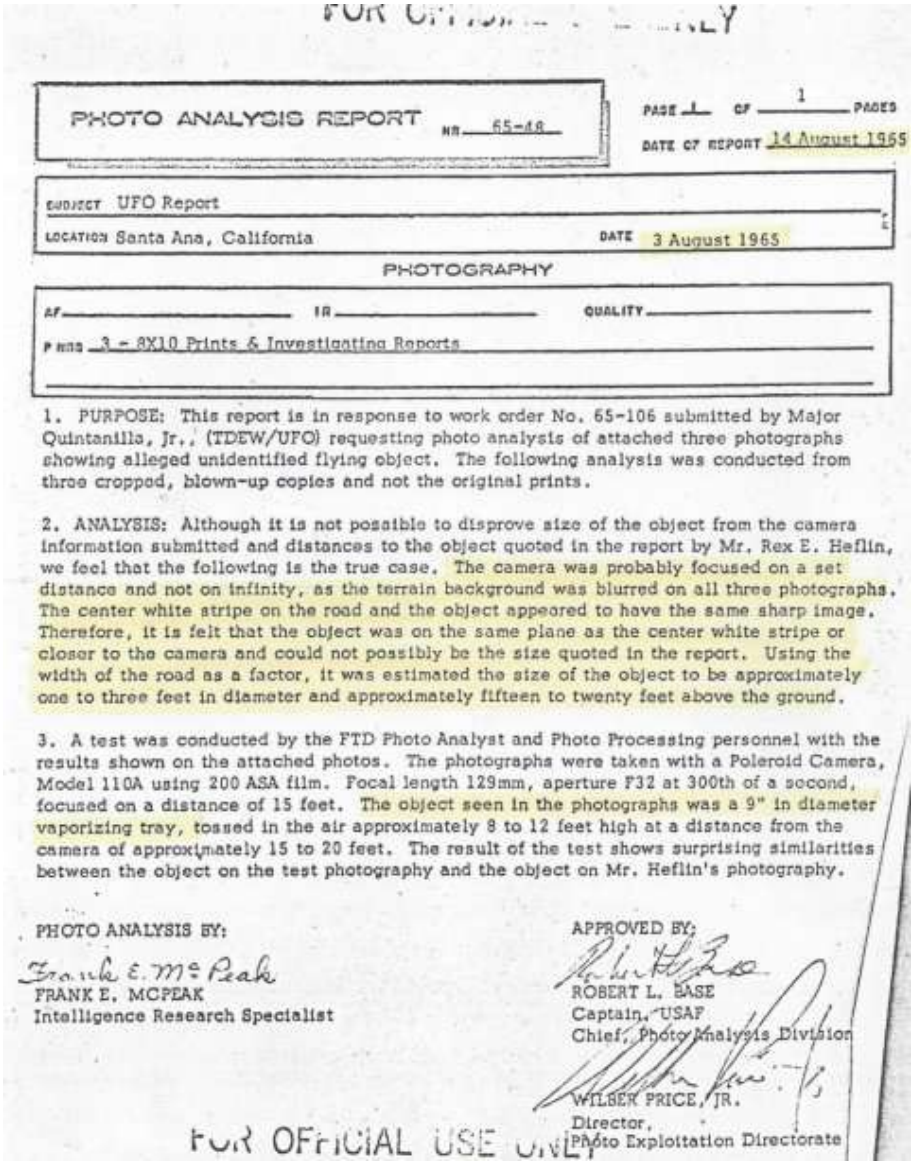


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PHOTO ANALYSIS REPORT NR 65-48

PAGE 1 OF 1 PAGES

DATE OF REPORT 14 August 1965

SUBJECT UFO Report

LOCATION Santa Ana, California DATE 3 August 1965

PHOTOGRAPHY

AF IR QUALITY

P NRS 3 - 8X10 Prints & Investigating Reports

1. PURPOSE: This report is in response to work order No. 65-106 submitted by Major Quintanilla, Jr., (TDEW/UFO) requesting photo analysis of attached three photographs showing alleged unidentified flying object. The following analysis was conducted from three cropped, blown-up copies and not the original prints.

2. ANALYSIS: Although it is not possible to disprove size of the object from the camera information submitted and distances to the object quoted in the report by Mr. Rex E. Heflin, we feel that the following is the true case. The camera was probably focused on a set distance and not on infinity, as the terrain background was blurred on all three photographs. The center white stripe on the road and the object appeared to have the same sharp image. Therefore, it is felt that the object was on the same plane as the center white stripe or closer to the camera and could not possibly be the size quoted in the report. Using the width of the road as a factor, it was estimated the size of the object to be approximately one to three feet in diameter and approximately fifteen to twenty feet above the ground.

3. A test was conducted by the FTD Photo Analyst and Photo Processing personnel with the results shown on the attached photos. The photographs were taken with a Poleroid Camera, Model 110A using 200 ASA film. Focal length 129mm, aperture F32 at 300th of a second, focused on a distance of 15 feet. The object seen in the photographs was a 9" in diameter vaporizing tray, tossed in the air approximately 8 to 12 feet high at a distance from the camera of approximately 15 to 20 feet. The result of the test shows surprising similarities between the object on the test photography and the object on Mr. Heflin's photography.

PHOTO ANALYSIS BY:

Frank E. McPeak

FRANK E. MCPEAK
Intelligence Research Specialist

APPROVED BY:

ROBERT L. BASE
Captain, USAF
Chief, Photo Analysis Division

WILBER PRICE, JR.
Director,
Photo Exploitation Directorate

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Air Force analysis of the Heflin photographs.

The white stripe on the object appeared to have the same sharp image. Therefore, it is felt that the object was on the same plane as the center white stripe or closer to the camera and could not possibly be the size quoted in the report. Using the width of the road as a factor, it was estimated the size of the object to be approximately one to three feet in diameter and approximately fifteen to twenty feet above the ground (Blue Book)."

The Air Force investigators also reported, "A test was conducted by the FTD Photo Analyst and Photo Processing personnel with the results showed on the attached photos. The photographs were taken with a Polaroid Camera, Model 110A using 200 ASA film.... The object seen in

the photographs was a 9" in diameter vaporizing tray, tossed in the air approximately 8 to 12 feet high at a distance from the camera of approximately 15 to 20 feet. The result of the test shows surprising similarities between the object on the test photography and the object on Mr. Heflin's photography."

On the other side of the coin, however, was the photographic analysis conducted by Ralph Rankow, a NICAP member, who said that his preliminary findings supported the authenticity of the pictures.

In all fairness, it must be noted that no one expected the Air Force to find anything other than the pictures were some kind of fake. And no one expected NICAP to find anything other than the pictures were authentic. The political agendas of the two organizations are apparent in their analysis of Heflin's pictures.

There was also a controversy surrounding the fourth of the Heflin photographs. When he returned to the office on August 3, he showed the three pictures of the UFO to his co-workers. He allowed friends to have the pictures copied. He showed those pictures to investigators and discussed them with reporters. Hundreds were aware that he had taken three pictures of the UFO that day.

What no one knew at the time was that Heflin had taken a fourth picture of a smoke ring that was allegedly left by the UFO. It was taken from farther down the road and could be an important clue as to the authenticity of the case.

The documentation available, and that is from the Air Force file, the NICAP investigation, and that of the *Santa Ana Register*, makes no mention of this picture. The Condon Committee investigators wrote, "During the early NICAP interview the presence of a fourth photo was not recorded, although the ring was apparently mentioned. During the Air Force interview, the witness not only did not mention the smoke ring or fourth photo, but gave a somewhat different description of the disappearance of the UFO (Gillmor, 1969)."

The Air Force report noted, "Just after taking the third picture of the UFO, Mr Heflin heard a vehicle approaching from the rear. Concerned that he might have parked in an awkward position, he turned around to see if there was enough road clearance for the vehicle to pass him. Noting that he was on the shoulder of the road, he immediately turned again to look at the UFO but found that it had 'disappeared into the haze'."

Mr Heflin states that at no time did he verbally agree to the release of the photographs or sign a statement of release. He also stated he wished it had never happened.

On 14 September 1965, the G-2 office at the El Toro Marine Corps Air Station learned that the photographs existed and contacted Mr Heflin on 18 September. See their report in Atch 3 to the basic letter.

Mr Heflin stated that following the publication of the UFO reports on 20 or 21 September, he received several telephone calls, including apparent hoax calls and two bomb threats. He also received two additional calls: one from a man who identified himself as a representative of Boeing and the other who identified himself as a representative of NORAD. According to Mr Heflin, both callers requested that he comment no more on the item "for reasons of national security", and that they would contact him personally as soon as possible. Mr Heflin said he was quite concerned about all of the phone calls for several reasons, the primary one being that his telephone number was unlisted and that he did not know how all of these people managed to get his telephone number. Although Mr Heflin's name was mentioned in the press releases, neither his address nor telephone number was mentioned. A check with the Orange County ~~Real~~ Department verified that Mr Heflin's telephone number is unlisted.

The Marine Corps G-2 investigator who had borrowed the original prints of the photography from Mr Heflin returned them to him at noon on 22 September. Both Frank Hall of the Santa Ana Register and Sergeant Dolyak of the G-2 office confirmed that Mr Heflin had given them the photographs without any hesitation, without attempting to verify their stated positions by closely examining their credentials, nor did he ask for any receipt for the photographs.

According to Mr Heflin, on the evening of 22 September a man in civilian clothing visited his house, flashed an identification card, and announced that he was an "investigator" from the North American Defense Command". Mr Heflin said that he did not examine the man's credentials closely but recalled that the man's I.D. card was in a special cardcase about 4"x5" (Comment: About the same card carrying case normally used by OSI, CIA, and other investigating officials.), and that the single I.D. card appeared to consist of two sections - the upper half being orange or pink in color, and the lower half being blue or bluegreen in color in the dimness of the porch light. Mr. Heflin stated that he gave the original prints of the photographs to this man, again without receipt (he being a trusting soul), and assumed

Part of the Air Force investigative analysis.

that he would eventually get the pictures back. He told the investigating officer that he would forward the photographs to SSD when they were returned (if they are returned).

Initially, the investigating officer was not able to contact Mr Heflin directly. On 23 September the investigating officer went to the Road Department offices in Santa Ana and asked how he could contact Mr Heflin. About one hour's conversation ensued with Mr Heflin's supervisor, Mr Kimmel, and one or two other officials in the Road Department. All vouched for Mr Heflin's character, etc., etc., which is described earlier in this report. At 1600 hours Mr Heflin returned from the field and the investigating officer interrogated him for about three and one hours, during which time most of the above information was obtained.

It was also determined that following the UPI press release the Road Department was swamped with telephone calls from all over the United States, and reached such a point that the officials and Mr Heflin had agreed to the following actions effective 22 September:

a. That Mr Heflin keep his vehicle radio off so that his daily duties would not be disturbed;

b. That his telephone number would be given out to all callers who were informed that they could contact him at his residence after 1730 hours;

c. That in certain instances, appointments would be made with the callers with Mr Heflin at his residence during evening hours.

One such appointment was made by a man who called the Road Departemtn and identified himself again as a Boeing representative. The appointment was made for the evening of 24 September. During the investigating officer's conversation with Mr Heflin, it was requested that in the event that the Boeing official or the NORAD official contacted Mr Heflin, he should obtain their name, office address, and try to determine their official status. Mr Heflin stated that he would do same or that he would not talk to them. A subsequent check showed that the "Boeing man" did not show up.

Based on the investigating officer's conversations with Mr Heflin, it appeared that he was a normal, upright and tolerant citizen. From all appearances he is not attempting to perpetrate a hoax. Based on knowledge of Mr Heflin's testimony to the Marine Corps investigator, it was obvious that some of the minor points in his story had changed. However, his basic story remained very consistent. It is believed

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that the discrepancies in Mr Heflin's statements were due to both of the following reasons:

a. The Marine Corps investigation was generally cursory while this investigating officer went into detailed questioning.

b. That Mr Heflin, while trying to provide as much information as possible, was faced with the problem of trying to recall a considerable number of specific points which had been observed some seven weeks' earlier.

It is considered probable that although Mr Heflin was doing his honest best to recall details, that he would have had some difficulty in trying to separate "fact from memory" from general discussions and suppositions put forth by all of the people who have talked with him prior to the investigating officer's contact with him.

Prior to the contact with Mr Heflin, the investigating officer had been informed by Mrs Sarah Hunt, SAFOI, of FTD's initial P.I. estimate. Based on this information, the investigating officer attempted to effect a minor ruse by stating that he personally had tried to perform analysis of the newspaper print of the UFO and that he personally had estimated that the UFO had a diameter of about three feet. Instead of being insulted or arguing or acting as though he had been caught in a hoax, Mr Heflin politely made the following comments:

a. That this was quite interesting since a man from North American Autonetics Division in Anahiem (who had gotten a copy of the photograph) had called him to say that it was only about four feet in diameter;

b. That he was still convinced that the object was about 30 feet in diameter and that he did not think he could make that great a mistake in observation. The investigating officer commented to Mr Heflin that he personally was rusty in analyzing photography and naturally had to work with a newspaper print which had obviously be retouched and that it obviously would be to everyone's benefit if we could obtain the original prints and have an accurate analysis performed by people more qualified to effect photo interpretation.

As stated above, Mr Heflin agreed to forward the original prints when and if they were returned by the alleged NORAD official.

Charles F Reichmuth

CHARLES F REICHMUTH
Captain, USAF
UFO Investigating Officer

5

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Heflin, when questioned about this said that he had been advised by a NICAP investigator to withhold some of the information from the Air

Force. An attempt by Condon Committee investigators to clear up the problem resulted in Heflin denying that he had invented any of the testimony. Everything he had said was true, but that didn't explain why there was but a single reference to the truck diverting his attention. The NICAP investigator thought that this one aspect of the tale might be a falsehood.

The problem with that thinking is that once you have caught the witness in a deliberate lie it calls all other testimony of that witness into question. If he would lie about one aspect, why not others, and how do you know when he is lying and when he is telling the truth.

The lie seemed to be designed to explain how the photograph of the smoke ring was taken. It was designed to explain an apparent discrepancy in the time line. The appearance of the truck which diverted his attention covered the point easily. But if it was true, why didn't he mention it again, after telling the Air Force about it?

At any rate, these changes in the story were enough for the skeptics and debunkers to dismiss the Heflin tale as a hoax. These "internal inconsistencies" proved that Heflin had invented the story for the publicity and excitement.

Those who wished to dismiss the Heflin story also directed attention to the clouds that appeared in the fourth picture. According to weather records from five different reporting facilities, there were no clouds in the sky on August 3. If true, that would suggest that picture number four was not made at the same time as the others and that would throw off the chronology, not to mention that it would be suggestive of a hoax.

Nearly twenty years after the Condon Committee report was issued, Heflin would tell Robert J. Kirkpatrick that he had "lost considerable credence in the scientific community when I saw the weight they placed on a review of the weather data supplied by five agencies in the area. Anyone familiar with the weather in Orange and Los Angeles counties knows what extreme variations exist in weather conditions from one locality to another and how quickly conditions can change."

Heflin, however, claimed that there was an additional witness. He told Kirkpatrick that a private pilot who had been flying from the Fullerton, California, airport also reported sighting the UFO. That pilot never came forward to corroborate the sighting. Heflin didn’t explain how he knew this.

Heflin also told Kirkpatrick, "In fact, a member of another field crew said he saw the same UFO. But he died in a traffic accident before any investigators could interview him."

These sorts of witnesses are of no value now because we have no record of their statements or who they are. A man who died before he corroborated the story, who left no legacy of his report does nothing to validate the Heflin case. There is no way to learn if he actually saw the UFO, if he suggested he had because he wanted some of the spotlight, or if this was just an attempt to show that others had, in fact, seen

something. It is also important to note that such things, witnesses who have failed to come forward, such as those in the Socorro landing, is not all that unusual.

The Condon Committee investigators drew no real conclusion in the Heflin case. They wrote, "From the point of view of the Colorado study the principal question of concern is: does a case have probative value in establishing the reality of unusual aircraft? In a case like this, where both the observer and the photographs clearly allege an extraordinary vehicle, a second question is, of course, automatically implied: Does the case represent a fabrication or was the object a true unknown?... We are concerned only with establishing evidence as to whether or not there exist extraordinary flying objects.

"In that context, this case is equivocal (Gillmor, 1969)."

In the conclusion section, it was noted that "The strongest arguments against the case are the clouds in photo four and the inconsistent early records regarding the 'NORAD' visitors. The photos themselves contain no geometric or physical data that permit a determination of distance or size independent of the testimony. Thus the witness' claims are the essential ingredients in the case. The case must remain inconclusive."

That wouldn't be the end of it, of course. The *Orange County Register* published an article by Amy Wilson on July 22, 1997. According to the article, Ed Riddle, a technical writer in Menlo Park, said that he had first seen Heflin's pictures when a man brought them into the lunchroom. Riddle said that the man said that a friend or neighbor had "rigged up a toy train wheel and some monofilament fishing line, hung them out his truck window, shot them and would maybe, just take them to the paper for some fun."

According to Riddle, in 1965, he called the newspaper to let them know that the pictures were a joke. But his tale was met with "gruff talk

about how if a man didn't have any proof, they didn't want to hear about it."

Wilson also reported that a second caller had told them that Heflin lost his job because of the controversy over the pictures. That wasn't true either. Heflin worked there for thirty years. In fact, he had retired in 1978 as Chief of the Traffic Investigation Division after a disabling injury. Clearly Heflin's career was not adversely affected by the UFO photographs.

But, as so often happens in the world of the UFO, that really isn't the end of the story. Given that there were pictures, a form of physical evidence, others were inspired to review the case. Questions about the authenticity of the photographs would continue to be discussed inside the UFO community for decades. A civilian group known as Ground Saucer Watch (GSW) obtained copies of the photographs and subjected them to computer enhancement.

GSW Photographic Consultant, Fred Adrian, concluded that the Heflin photographs were a hoax. In an issue of GSW "News Bulletin" they reported the pictures "represent both crude and grandiose hoaxes [sic] or photographic anomalies and should not be considered evidence of UFO existence [sic]."

One of the anomalies found by the computer enhancement was a string holding up the small model of the UFO. But it seems that GSW wasn't using first generation copies, but copies that were much older than that. The string, which lead, in part to the negative conclusion by GSW analysts might have been an artifact created by multiple copying of the original pictures. Or, to put it bluntly, there might not have been a string, just an artifact created in repeated reproduction from prints rather than negatives.

This analysis, though somewhat questionable did affect the credibility of the pictures. Added to McDonald's suggestion that the cloud formations seen in the smoke ring picture were inconsistent with the sky conditions in the first three of the pictures, many believed the pictures had been effectively debunked. They were faked.

However, when challenged about the results, Spaudling admitted that the string could be a scratch rather than a string. And, although he and his team had analyzed four different sets of the photographs, all could have come from the same unnamed source. In other words, it wasn't four different sets prints, but actually four copies of the same photograph.

While the admission is interesting, Spaudling didn't withdraw his analysis, which is what many in the UFO community remembered.

McDonald never did get over his worry about the seeming flat sky in the three pictures of the object and the cloud formations in the smoke ring picture. But that artifact might have been a problem with the camera rather than the sky. A bright sky, seen in one direction by the camera might appear to be more or less flat, but another picture taken at a different angle might show the clouds that were there, just obscured in the first pictures.

All this led to another examination of the photographs. Remember, the originals had disappeared not all the long after they had been taken. Heflin's habit of loaning them to all who asked from them resulted in their disappearance. There had already been dozens of copies made and there were copies of the copies of the copies. Each generation reduced the data available on the photographs, which simply meant that everything became fuzzier and fuzzier and any analysis became less accurate.

Then, in 1993, after the GSW analysis, Heflin received an anonymous telephone call. A woman asked if he had been to his mail box lately. She then hung up. Heflin walked out to the mailbox, but there was nothing in it. Thirty minutes later, the woman called back, asked the same question and hung up. This time, in the mailbox was a manila envelope with no writing, postage or postmarks on it. Inside were the three lost photographs.

Heflin was able to verify that these were the original pictures. He had numbered them in blue ink and on the top, in all capital letters, was the word "Original." On the back, someone had lightly written "13." There were also fingerprints on the photographs. A new analysis could be made using the originals rather than copies of copies of copies.

Dr. Robert Wood, an aerospace scientist, learned that the originals had been recovered. Ann Duffel, who had been involved in the original NICAP investigation, contacted Heflin to suggest state-of-the-art computer enhancement. Eric Kelson, an expert in computer enhancement techniques offered to perform the analysis.

In a paper published in the *Journal of Scientific Exploration* in 2000, a paper prepared by those three, provided a clear history of the photographs and a new analysis based on their work using better computer and analysis techniques. Using the originals, they found no

evidence of a thread or string holding up a small model. That negated the GSW conclusions and the theory that the object was actually a model train wheel.

More importantly, the new research found a wake behind the object, which had not been reported before. They concluded that this showed a real object moving through the air and not a model of some sort attached to a string. They wrote, "… the mid-1970s GSW analysis that showed a string was a stunning error, certainly not based on legitimate copies, and possibly hoaxed itself, by persons unknown, on the copies that Spaulding and GSW used."

They also found that all the clouds in the photographs were consistent, eliminating the objection that McDonald had raised years earlier.

Their final conclusion was, "Our reanalysis of the August 3, 1965, Heflin photos confirms that Heflin's account of the sighting is entirely consistent with his pictures and reconfirms that the witness/photographer was not involved in a hoax. This analysis represents a general study that specifically addressed the historical issues behind these photographs."

There is probably one other comment that should be made. Many inside the UFO community worry about how much money is made by those who claim to have seen something strange. Heflin's pictures have been used in dozens of magazine articles and books about UFOs. When he took the pictures in 1965, he didn't bother to have them copyrighted. Anyone could use them without having to pay for the privilege. Heflin never received any money for the use of his pictures. The monetary objection is therefore neutralized.

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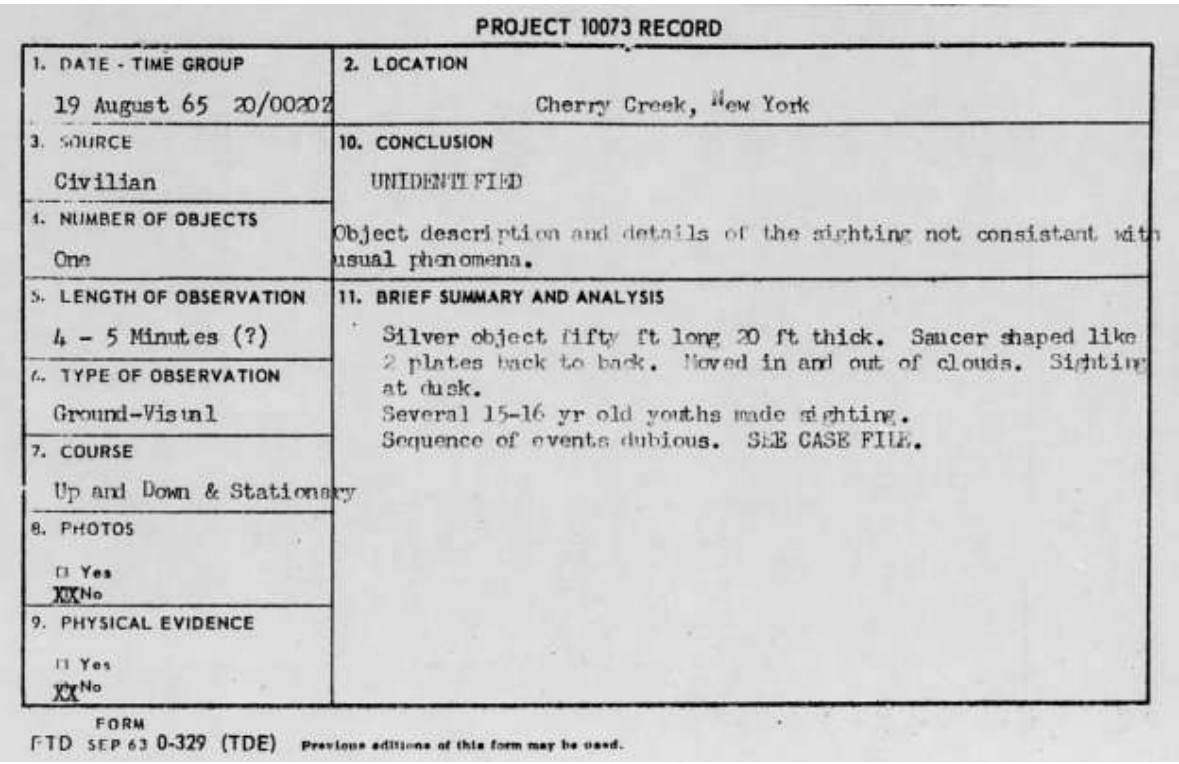
Chapter 12: Cherry Creek, NY: August 19, 1965



PROJECT 10073 RECORD

1. DATE - TIME GROUP 19 August 65 20/0020Z	2. LOCATION Cherry Creek, New York
3. SOURCE Civilian	10. CONCLUSION UNIDENTIFIED
4. NUMBER OF OBJECTS One	Object description and details of the sighting not consistant with usual phenomena.
5. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION 4 - 5 Minutes (?)	11. BRIEF SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS Silver object fifty ft long 20 ft thick. Saucer shaped like 2 plates back to back. Moved in and out of clouds. Sighting at dusk. Several 15-16 yr old youths made sighting. Sequence of events dubious. SEE CASE FILE.
6. TYPE OF OBSERVATION Ground-Visual	
7. COURSE Up and Down & Stationary	
8. PHOTOS ☐ Yes XX No	
9. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE ☐ Yes XX No	

FORM
FTD SEP 63 0-329 (TDE) Previous editions of this form may be used.

Project Blue Book Project card.

After an investigation, the Air Force labeled the case as “Unidentified.” It involved multiple witnesses, a hint of physical evidence and claimed electromagnetic effects. In a sense it mirrored parts of the Levelland case, and the physical evidence recovered seemed to be tied to other, older cases. In other words, and given the location and the timing of the events, it might be a much stronger case than some thought.

Nearly everyone who reports on this case uses the investigation done by Jeffrey J. Gow of NICAP, as the basis for their analysis. Gow was the first on the scene, arriving there in a matter of hours and conducted the initial interviews with many of the witnesses. Even the Air Force, indirectly, used Gow’s research in their investigation (Galgansky, 1996; Gow, 1965).

According to Gow in the report he made to NICAP, he entered the investigation on August 20, 1965, when he visited the Fredonia State Police Station. He spoke with Trooper E. J. Haas, who provided the initial

information about the sighting. Gow did note that what Haas said was essentially the same story that he heard from the main witness, sixteen-year-old Harold Butcher.

Gow reported that Butcher was milking the cows at 8:20 p.m. on August 19, and listening to the news on the radio. As it ended at 8:15, he heard the three-year-old bull make a noise, “like I have never heard come from the animal before.” He looked out of the barn’s east window and saw the bull, tethered to a metal pole by a nose ring, trying to escape. And beyond the bull, hovering just above the treetops was a football-shaped object. He would later tell the APRO investigator, Perry C. Euchner, that it was “like two turkey platters lip to lip.” It was about 450 feet from the barn.

As the UFO descended behind a large maple tree, Butcher noticed that the radio was making “a heck of a lot of noise like a loud static.” It was at that point that the tractor, which was being used to run the milking machine, failed. He wasn’t sure if the object touched the ground then or not because of the elevations involved. As it slowly descended, it was emitting a “red vapor downward from around the edges, not from the middle.” The object made a beep-beep or bizz-bizz sound as it landed.

Using the telephone in the barn, he called across the street to tell them what he was seeing. He returned to the window and then ran outside. Before he could get close to it, the object climbed up into the clouds as Butcher later described it, “as fast as a snap of my fingers.” As it began to rise, the red vapor shot from the edges toward the ground. As the object hovered about ten feet over the ground the vapor bounced back to the ship. The noise from the craft continued to grow until it sounded similar to that of a sonic boom. But those in the house across the road would later say they didn’t hear the sound.

As craft disappeared into the clouds, they turned green. Harold stopped, turned around and ran to the farmhouse. No one there had heard anything or seen anything. Mrs. Butcher did say that she had noticed interference on her radio but nothing else.

Gow said that Butcher had run into the house yelling about what he had seen. Back outside with his brother, Robert, they both saw the object hovering over a pine grove in the distance. Harold thought it was the same object. Robert only got a fleeting glance at it but noticed the red vapor as it retreated into the clouds. Both of them saw the clouds turn green again. From the point that Harold saw the object to the time it

disappeared into the clouds the second time, about ten minutes had elapsed. Sightings of the object, in both cases, was under a minute.

Although others went outside to look for the object, they saw nothing unusual. Mrs. William Butcher, then called the Fredonia State Police Station to report the sighting. Officer C. J. Hass was ordered to the farm and arrived sometime between 8:30 and 9:00 p.m.

YOUNG U.F.O. OBSERVER—Harold Butcher, 16, first to report sighting of a mysterious flying object at the family farm on Aldrich Hill Road, north of Cherry Creek, Thursday evening, points to evidence which tends to corroborate his story. Appearance of the strange craft, he said, had caused a large Holstein bull, chained to a heavy steel crowbar in a nearby field, to panic and in its violent efforts to break away, it bent the bar to almost a 45 degree angle.
—Post-Journal Staffoto

About 9:00 p.m., according to the report written by Gow, Kathleen Brougham ran into the house screaming, “It’s here again.” She then ran back outside, followed by the others.

Four people watched the object hovering in the southeast. Now it had a yellow vapor trail. This sighting lasted about a minute and Harold Butcher said that it looked like the object he had seen earlier. Gow reported that they saw a glowing yellow vapor, the green glow in the clouds, and a faint outline of the object itself. The object then slid over a hill in the southwest.

Hass, with another trooper, Neilson, arrived about this time. They all walked around the area where Butcher had seen the object the first time.

Now they said there was a strange odor but no physical evidence was found to suggest the object had touched down.

The next day, the Air Force got involved. Captain James A. Dorsey and four others, Sergeants George Wood and James Hartman and two civilian technicians, Charles Moore and Elmer Link, all from the Niagara Falls Air Force Base, arrived to investigate the sighting. Harold pointed out that he had found some purple liquid that smelled like “3 in 1” oil (Gow, 1965; Bryce, 1965; NICAP 1965). Dorsey and his team took samples. According to the *Jamestown Post-Journal* of August 21, 1965, that substance was found by a Falconer State Trooper on the morning of August 20.

Another trooper had searched the area the morning after the sighting. According to Harold Butcher, the trooper found a number of places where sod had been disturbed. These marks were about six inches wide and two feet long. The trooper thought these might have been skid marks left by a helicopter but Butcher said he knew what a helicopter looked like. He said, “That’s not what I saw.”

Dorsey and his team spent a couple of hours investigating the sighting and walking the fields. He told the *Buffalo Evening News* on August 21st, that a youth, Butcher, saw something but that there was no radar confirmation that meant nothing.

Gow interviewed Dorsey on August 24th. He was now less candid in what he had to say. He said that no analysis had been performed on the recovered liquid because they lacked the proper chemicals. He said that he couldn’t talk about the radar report from what was described as a “filler radar station,” which was near the Butcher farm. He cited Air Force Regulation 200-2, which prohibited the discussion of UFO sightings that had not been readily identified.

Gow also spoke to all those who had been there during the sighting except William, Jr., and Kathleen. He did talk to them by telephone a few days later. Gow said their stories matched perfectly. Harold said he didn’t know much about UFOs but that he had seen articles in the local newspaper about recent sightings in Oklahoma.

While talking with Mrs. Butcher, Gow learned that her niece, Sharon Rouland, said that at the time of the sightings on August 19, her television filled with interference. At that time, she lived about five miles from the farm and thought the interference might be related to the sighting. There is no evidence to connect her observation with the UFO

and no reports of the trouble from others who lived in the area. Of course, the level of interference might account for that.

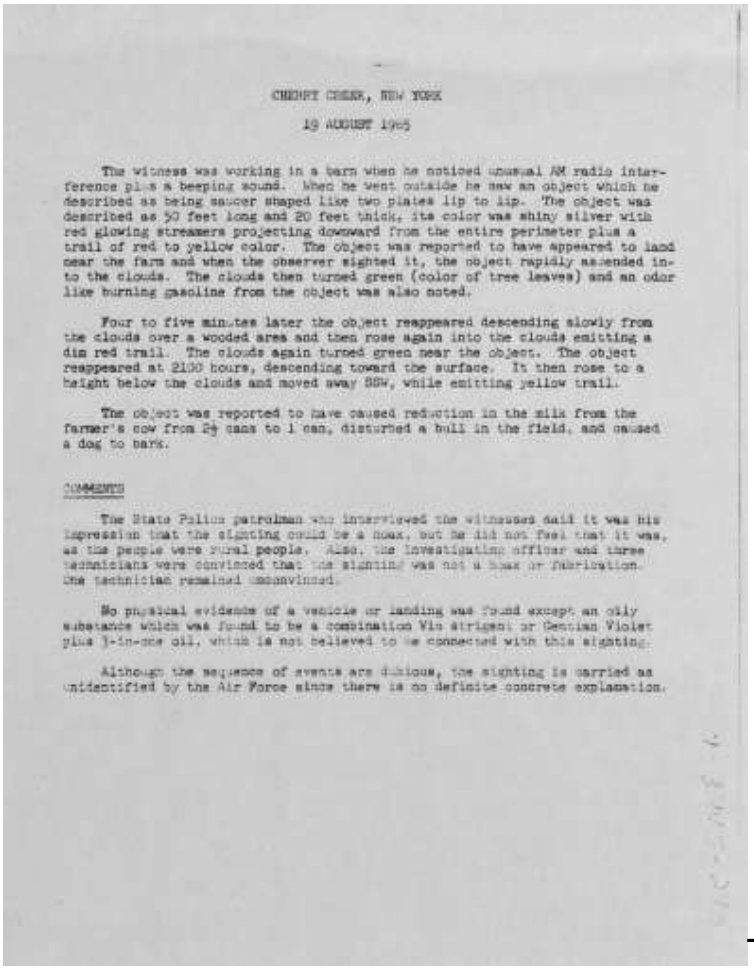
Gow gathered information from several of the witnesses who recalled the odor at one of the sites. Franklin Elderkin said that it smelled like phosphene gas, which he had worked with for his job. Dorsey later said that phosphene is odorless. Assuming that they meant phosphine gas, which in its pure state is odorless then the analysis is correct but the technical grade samples do have a highly unpleasant odor that has been described as like garlic or rotting fish.

Gow also gathered plant samples. He reported they looked to be singed on one side but were still green on the other, not unlike some of those plants gathered in Socorro some 18 months earlier. In that same area, Gow reported seeing the tracks and said they were two inches deep. He said that "…over an area of about 60 feet one track would appear in a spot, the other track just beyond it, but in two spots both appeared together." According to Gow, he was told that there were no farm tools or equipment that would make that sort of track.

NICAP reported on the sightings and provided information on the analysis of some of the material that had been recovered. According to the documentation:

> …samples were studied by the Kawecki Chemical Co.; whose president is a NICAP advisor. Spectrographic analysis showed the main elements of the liquid to be aluminum, iron and silicon. Some phosphorous was found in the weed samples, which the analyst said might cause a phosphine smell, explaining the odd odor (Galganski, 1996).

The Blue Book analysis of the case.



CHENPT CREEK, NEW YORK

19 AUGUST 1965

The witness was working in a barn when he noticed unusual AM radio interference plus a beeping sound. When he went outside he saw an object which he described as being saucer shaped like two plates lip to lip. The object was described as 50 feet long and 20 feet thick, its color was shiny silver with red glowing streamers projecting downward from the entire perimeter plus a trail of red to yellow color. The object was reported to have appeared to land near the farm and when the observer sighted it, the object rapidly ascended into the clouds. The clouds then turned green (color of tree leaves) and an odor like burning gasoline from the object was also noted.

Four to five minutes later the object reappeared descending slowly from the clouds over a wooded area and then rose again into the clouds emitting a dim red trail. The clouds again turned green near the object. The object reappeared at 2100 hours, descending toward the surface. It then rose to a height below the clouds and moved away SSW, while emitting yellow trail.

The object was reported to have caused reduction in the milk from the farmer's cow from 2½ cans to 1 can, disturbed a bull in the field, and caused a dog to bark.

COMMENTS

The State Police patrolman who interviewed the witnesses said it was his impression that the sighting could be a hoax, but he did not feel that it was, as the people were rural people. Also, the investigating officer and three technicians were convinced that the sighting was not a hoax or fabrication. One technician remained unconvinced.

No physical evidence of a vehicle or landing was found except an oily substance which was found to be a combination Vis stringent or Gentian Violet plus 3-in-one oil, which is not believed to be connected with this sighting.

Although the sequence of events are dubious, the sighting is carried as unidentified by the Air Force since there is no definite concrete explanation.

The Air Force found nothing contradictory in the reports given by the witnesses. On the Project Record Card, Air Force officers wrote, “Object description and details of the sightings not consistant [sic] with usual phenomena (Blue Book).”

Oddly, the Air Force noted that there was no physical evidence in the case, which could be a result of the way the liquid had been gathered or that it seemed to be terrestrial oil. In the end, however, the Air Force determined the sighting was “Unidentified.”

Robert A. Galganski, who has a master’s degree in civil engineering, decided in 1996, to review the case. He wrote, “Later, I found the case summarized in a number of books and other publications… But these accounts seemed incomplete or displayed obvious major discrepancies.”

Galganski praised Gow’s NICAP report and used it as the baseline for his own investigation. He noted that there were three sightings beginning with that of Harold Butcher on August 19 while he was in the barn. The second sighting took place minutes later, after Harold had told

others about the craft and returned outside. His brother Robert was with him as an additional witness.

Originally Harold Butcher, in his report to NICAP's Richard Hall, said the sightings lasted under a minute. Galganski wrote, "This estimate appears to conflict with the five-to-ten-second duration given to each of these sightings by Fair and Maxwell [Dr. Fred Fair, professor emeritus of engineering, John J. Maxwell]." Of course, five to ten seconds is under a minute.

The final sighting of the night involved four teenagers. Kathleen Brougham ran into the house to report the object was back. Three of the boys followed her back out and saw the object as it crossed a road and emitted a yellow exhaust.

Here again Fair and Maxwell suggested a short duration sighting of five to ten seconds while Gow, in his written report said it lasted about a minute. Not much in the way of a discrepancy, given the inability to accurately gauge time in a stressful situation.

Galganski also tried to straighten the reports of the physical evidence. He noted that Gow didn't arrived until August 21, so his analysis of the earlier events is based on what the witnesses told him rather than direct observation. Galganski provided a timeline that showed:

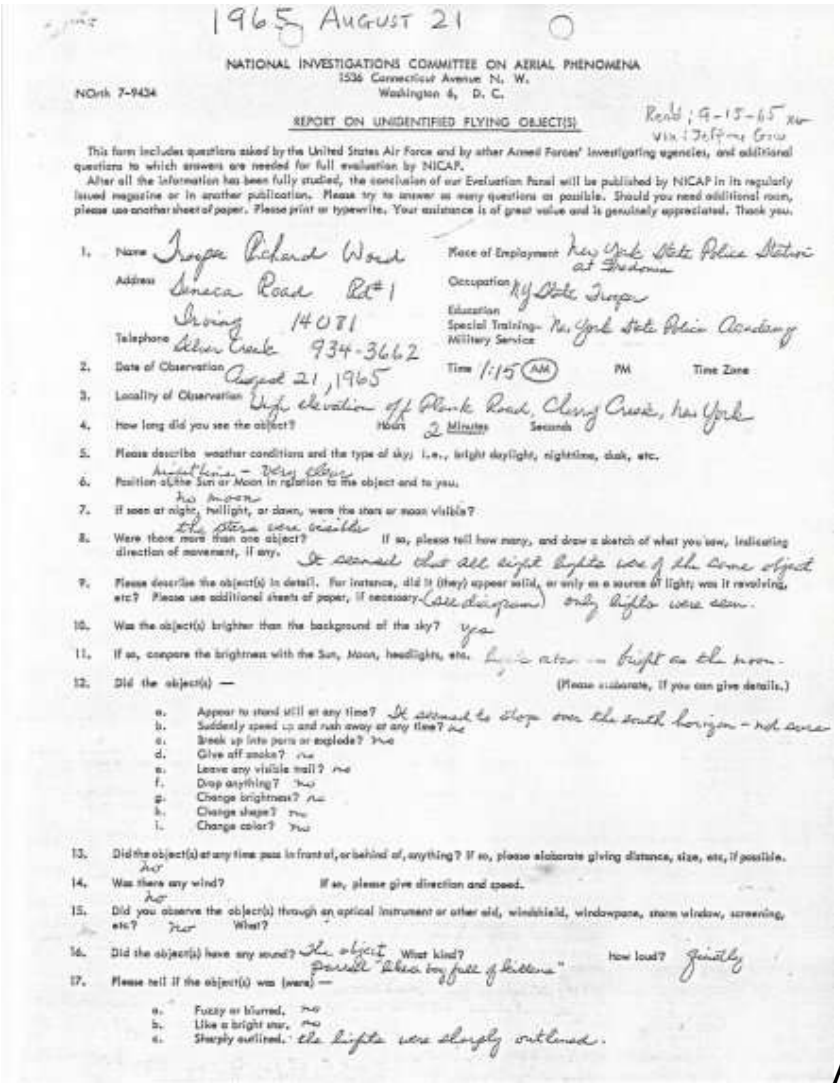
> **August 19**. State Troopers E. J. Haas and P. M. Neilson arrived at the Carr farm shortly after 9 p.m. … Nothing unusual was found.
>
> **August 20**. Harold stumbled and fell while walking the Area #1 [first sighting location], resulting in an allegedly unusual purple-colored liquid on the sod that stained his hands. He described it as feeling oily, with an odor similar to 3-in-One oil…
>
> Later that afternoon, a five-man investigative team lead by Captain James A. Dorsey, operations officer of the 4621st Air Force Group… arrived at the Carr farm. After spending a few hours interviewing the witnesses and neighbors and inspecting the site, they left with the sod sample containing the UPS [unidentified purple sample] …
>
> **August 21**. [Gow] arrived at Carr farm… and interviewed all the witnesses except William [Butcher] Jr. and Kathleen Brougham… He examined all the sighting areas and picked up plants (weeds?) in [the first sighting area] that appeared to be singed on one side but green on the opposite side…

A walk through the foot-tall grass in [area of the third sighting] revealed sections that appeared to have been “bent over in long, curved sweeps.”

August 22. When Gow returned the next day, he learned that several people, including Harold, claimed to have detected sporadic odor in Area #1… that smelled like burned diesel fuel or phosphine… Gow noted that he didn’t smell anything unusual when he was there just hours before that time…

August 23. Fred Fair examined some holes that Harold had found in Area #1.

Page two of the NICAP Form.



1965 AUGUST 21

NATIONAL INVESTIGATIONS COMMITTEE ON AERIAL PHENOMENA
1536 Connecticut Avenue N. W.
NOrth 7-9434 Washington 6, D. C.

REPORT ON UNIDENTIFIED FLYING OBJECT(S)

Read: 9-13-65 nw
via: Jeffrey Gow

This form includes questions asked by the United States Air Force and by other Armed Forces' investigating agencies, and additional questions to which answers are needed for full evaluation by NICAP.
After all the information has been fully studied, the conclusion of our Evaluation Panel will be published by NICAP in its regularly issued magazine or in another publication. Please try to answer as many questions as possible. Should you need additional room, please use another sheet of paper. Please print or typewrite. Your assistance is of great value and is genuinely appreciated. Thank you.

1. Name Trooper Richard Wood — Place of Employment New York State Police Station at Hedonia
Address Seneca Road Rt#1 — Occupation NY State Trooper
Irving 14081 — Education
Telephone Silver Creek 934-3662 — Special Training NY State Police Academy
Military Service
2. Date of Observation August 21, 1965 — Time 1:15 (AM) PM Time Zone
3. Locality of Observation High elevation off Plank Road, Chevy Creek, New York
4. How long did you see the object? Hours 2 Minutes Seconds
5. Please describe weather conditions and the type of sky; i.e., bright daylight, nighttime, dusk, etc.
Partly cloudy - very clear
6. Position of the Sun or Moon in relation to the object and to you.
No moon
7. If seen at night, twilight, or dawn, were the stars or moon visible?
the stars were visible
8. Were there more than one object? If so, please tell how many, and draw a sketch of what you saw, indicating direction of movement, if any. It seemed that all eight lights were of the same object
9. Please describe the object(s) in detail. For instance, did it (they) appear solid, or only as a source of light; was it revolving, etc? Please use additional sheets of paper, if necessary. (see diagram) only lights were seen.
10. Was the object(s) brighter than the background of the sky? yes
11. If so, compare the brightness with the Sun, Moon, headlights, etc. lights were not bright as the moon.
12. Did the object(s) — (Please elaborate, if you can give details.)
a. Appear to stand still at any time? It seemed to stop over the south horizon - not sure
b. Suddenly speed up and rush away at any time? no
c. Break up into parts or explode? no
d. Give off smoke? no
e. Leave any visible trail? no
f. Drop anything? no
g. Change brightness? no
h. Change shape? no
i. Change color? no
13. Did the object(s) at any time pass in front of, or behind of, anything? If so, please elaborate giving distance, size, etc, if possible.
no
14. Was there any wind? If so, please give direction and speed.
no
15. Did you observe the object(s) through an optical instrument or other aid, windshield, windowpane, storm window, screening, etc? no What?
16. Did the object(s) have any sound? The object What kind? How loud? faintly
Parrell "like a toy full of kittens"
17. Please tell if the object(s) was (were) —
a. Fuzzy or blurred, no
b. Like a bright star, no
c. Sharply outlined. the lights were sharply outlined.

As Galganski pointed out in his analysis, there were some problems with the discovery of the physical evidence. He noted that in a September 4, 1965, audiotape of a

NICAP meeting, Harold Butcher said that he had found the tracks on the day after the sighting. Galganski wondered, if they had been there because of the sighting, why had none of the investigators found them earlier. He found this to be incomprehensible.

Fair wasn't impressed with the holes that Harold had found. There were five of them, only an inch or two in diameter and no more than two inches deep. Since there had been several investigators in that field, and they had examined it carefully during their investigations, Fair wrote, "But I have a suspicion that the only one who would have noted these small holes was the person who put them there (Galganski, 1996)." In other words, Fair believe this bit of physical evidence had been created by Harold Butcher to bolster the credibility of his sightings and had nothing to do with the object he reported.

Galganski, like so many others, placed some emphasis on the lack of radar confirmation. Chester Metcalf, a watch supervisor at one of the radar facilities,

said that nothing had been seen on the radars. Dorsey, of course, had said as much earlier, but when asked about it later said that he could provide no information about the radar coverage or anything seen on radar that night based on Air Force Regulation 200-2. This was superseded on September 19, 1966 by AFR 80-17, which required the same responses as it 200-2.

The *Buffalo Courier Express* quoted Dorsey on August 22. "I don't think this is a hoax. These children saw something. But I'm no expert so we'll leave it up to the people who study such things. We questioned him [Harold Butcher] repeatedly and he was consistent on his story. So were the others."

In the end, those at Project Blue Book labeled the sighting as "unidentified." The officers at Blue Book concluded, "Although the sequence of events are dubious, the sighting is carried as unidentified by the Air Force since there is no definite concrete explanation."

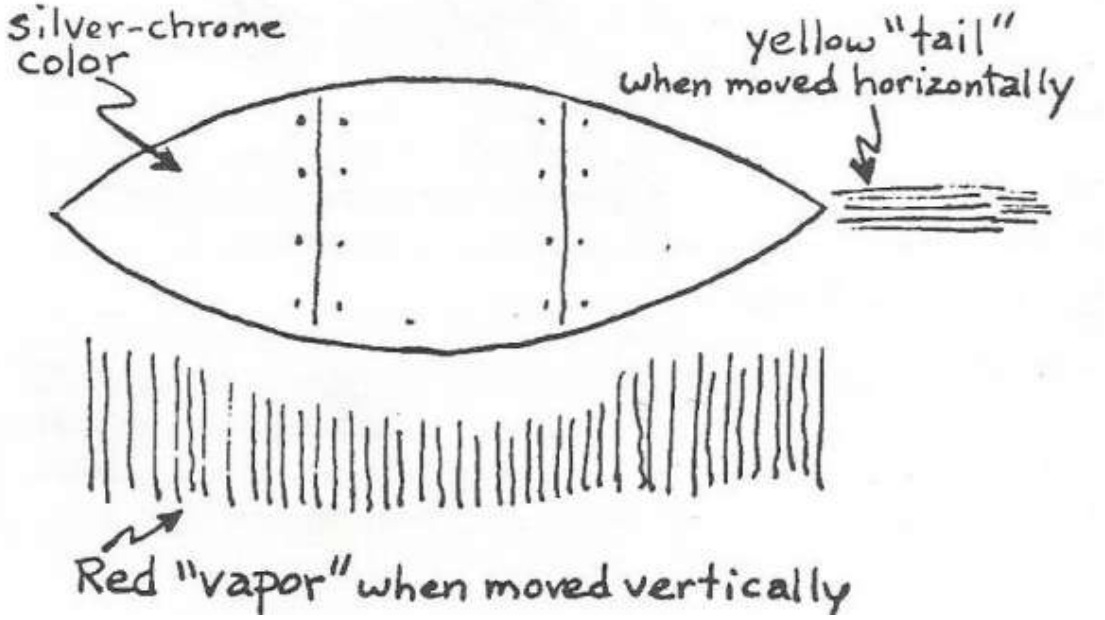
Although this was a very charitable way for Blue Book to conclude an investigation, it is not a scientific way. In most similar cases, this would have been labeled as "insufficient data for a scientific analysis," or as a "hoax." Galganski, after his review of the Blue Book files and the NICAP investigation, wasn't quite as positive about the solution as was the Air Force.

Galganski wrote, “It appears that Harold Butcher found most of the physical traces when nobody else was around. One could argue that if he had the time to poke around out there, he could also have been hard at work ‘manufacturing’ evidence to help support the UFO sightings.” Galganski concluded that there was no definitive link between the sightings and the physical evidence other than location and timing.

On the electromagnetic effects, Galganski, wrote that there was a historical precedent for the radio interference, so that there could have been a causal relationship. On the other claims, he thought they were highly suspect if for no other reason that they weren’t reported until long after the initial account.

Unlike the Air Force officers, Galganski was less than impressed with the sightings. He wrote, “There are some things about the visual sightings that are a bit hard to swallow.” Specifically, he was bothered by the fact that Harold Butcher had reported a loud boom but no one else heard it. None of those who had been in the house, and who ran out saw the green colored clouds, though they remained green for five minutes, saw that. Finally, he thought that the NICAP investigator was inexperienced and might not have asked a key question.

Galganski’s tentative conclusion was that the “lack of definitive – and in some instances, the presence of suspicious – physical traces, coupled with the above-noted nagging problems with just the sightings alone, disturbed me. I was



The UFO as reported.

ready to write the case off as a clever hoax… But newspaper clippings and another convincing report in the NICAP file indicated there was other UFO activity in the immediate region… These events caused me to reconsider my initial conclusion…"

Galganski wrote that one of the important cases he found in the NICAP file also had been investigated by Gow. Two New York State Troopers, Richard C. Ward and his partner, identified only as Purcell, were near the crest of Plank Road about 1:15 a.m. on August 21, about a mile and a half from the Carr farm (where Harold Butcher was), discussing the UFO events. In the moonless sky, they spotted a straight line of lights moving toward them. It flew directly overhead at about 2000 to 3000 feet. The lights were in sight for an estimated two minutes.

The officer described the lights as brilliant, like the moon, sharply outlined "amber-orange circles the size of a silver dollar held at arm's length and trailing a small, red light. There were dark spaces between each of the lights in the chain. They also heard a humming noise described as sounding like a "bagful of kittens."

There were other sightings as well, including additional sightings by Harold Butcher. He was with his brother John and his cousin Richard Butcher. They saw a deep yellow-orange ball of fire. This time the car radio and lights began to fail. The sighting was also witnessed by Harold's father and two others at a cannery near them. In other words, witnesses were at two different locations.

That same night, there was still another sighting by the Butchers. The whole family watched as an object hovered above the wooded area near the house. It seemed to suggest that the area was in a "mini-flap," that is a period of intense activity confined to a relatively small region.

After Galganski reviewed the evidence as it had been reported by the Air Force and NICAP, he wrote that the "…Cherry Creek incident documentation indicated that the case was contaminated by a lot of 'noise' – namely a principal witness with a penchant for embellishing his initial observations, dubious (at best) physical evidence, and numerous loose ends."

However, Galganski also wrote, "Harold Butcher and the three other teenagers most likely *did* [emphasis added] see something out of the ordinary on the evening of August 19, 1965. My best guess scenario is that they probably saw what others in the general vicinity observed but

reported in considerably less sensational terms – something resembling a bright or fiery spherical light source."

Galganski completes his analysis by writing, "In my opinion, the Cherry Creek incident was *not* a hoax. It probably originated as a typical UFO sighting…"

Galganski did one thing that others didn't. He found Harold Butcher in 1996 and interviewed him about the sighting. He did ask about those small holes Butcher had found. Butcher said, during that interview, the holes were two to three feet deep. Galganski called Gow, who said that he never saw any depressions. Is this enough to reject the case? Not really.

Galganski did one thing that was interesting and that was point out that there were other sightings in the area at the same time as those made by Butcher. He just didn't take this avenue of investigation far enough. There were other sightings around the country over the years that seem to match some of the elements of the Cherry Creek case. Butcher, given who he was, probably hadn't heard of them. These cases add a bit of credibility to his reports.

On September 12, 1952, teenagers, and later several adults, were witnesses to the sighting of an object and a creature near Flatwoods, West Virginia. About 7:15 p.m., a bright red light, "rounded the corner of a hill" crossed the valley, seemed to hover above a hilltop and then fell behind the hill. One of the boys, Neil (or sometimes Neal) Nunley, said that he thought the glowing object might have been a meteorite. He knew that fragments of meteorites were collected by scientists, so he suggested they all go look for it (Clark, 2019; Randle, 2018; Sanderson, 1967; Keyhoe 1953; Blue Book).

As they watched, there was a bright orange flare that faded to a dull cherry glow near where the object had disappeared. As three of the boys started up the hill, toward the lights, they saw them cycle through the sequence a couple of times. The lights provided a beacon for them, showing them where the object was.

They ran up the main street, crossed a set of railroad tracks and came to a point where there were three houses, one of them belonging to the May family. Kathleen May came out of the house to learn what was happening and where the boys were going. Told about the lights on

the hill, and that "a flying saucer has landed," she said that she wanted to go with them. Before they left, May suggested that Eugene Lemon, a seventeen-year-old member of the National Guard (which has no real relevance to the story, but is a fact that is always carefully reported) went to look for a flashlight.

They found the path that lead up the hill, opened and then closed a gate, and continued along the winding path. Lemon and Nunley were in the lead with May, her son Eddie, following, and they were trailed by others including Ronald Shaver and Ted Neal. Tommy Hyer was in the rear, not far behind the others as they climbed the hill.

As they approached the final bend in the path, Lemon's large dog, which had been running ahead, began barking and howling, and then reappeared, running down the hill, obviously frightened. Lemon noticed, as the dog passed him, that a mist was spreading around them. As they got closer to the top of the hill, they all smelled a foul odor. Their eyes began to water.

Some of them reported that they saw, on the ground in front of them, a big ball of fire, described as the size of an outhouse, or about fifteen or twenty feet across. It was pulsating orange to red and back again. Interestingly, although it was big and bright, not everyone in the tiny party reported it.

Kathleen May spotted something in a nearby tree. She thought they were the eyes of an owl or other animal. Nunley, who was carrying the flashlight, turned it toward the eyes. What they saw was not an animal, but some sort of creature, at least in their perception. The being was large, described as about the size of a full-grown man. They could see no arms or legs, but did see a head that was shaped like an ace of spades. That was a description that would reoccur with all these witnesses. No one was sure if there were eyes on the creature, or if there was a clear space on the head, resembling a window, and that the eyes were somehow behind the that window and behind the face.

Lemon reacted most violently of the small party when he saw the object. He passed out. There was confusion, they were all scared, and

no one sure what to do. The boys grabbed the unconscious Lemon and then ran back the way they had come.

They finally reached May's house. Inside, they managed to bring Lemon back to full consciousness. They called others, and a number of adults arrived at the May house. The group, armed with rifles and flashlights, headed back up the hill, to search for the strange creature. None of the men seemed to be too excited about going up the hill, and in less than a half an hour, they were back, claiming they had found nothing at all.

Still others, including the sheriff, eventually arrived at the house. Most of them didn't bother to mount any sort of search that night, and the sheriff, who was clearly skeptical, refused to investigate further than talking to May and the boys.

Two newspaper reporters, apparently from rival newspapers, did, at least, walk up the hill, but they saw nothing. They did, however, note the heavy, metallic odor that had been described by May and her group which provided a partial confirmation of the story. And that seems to link it, indirectly, to what Butcher would say a decade and a half later.

A. Lee Stewart, Jr., one of the editors of *The Braxton Democrat* convinced Lemon to lead them back to the spot of the sighting. Given Lemon's initial reaction, it says something about the kid that he agreed to do so. They found nothing and saw nothing but did smell that strange odor. Steward returned early the next morning and found what he said looked like skid marks about ten feet apart heading down the hill. He said that a large area of grass had been crushed.

The next day, there were follow-up investigations. During some of these additional trips up the hill, it was reported that they had found an area where the grass had been crushed in a circular pattern. Ivan T. Sanderson, who was interested in the paranormal, visited the scene a week later. Sanderson said that he and his fellow investigators were able to see the crushed grass and a slight depression in the ground. No one bothered to photograph this reported physical evidence which is one of the problems that seem to flow through UFO research as we have seen

any number of times. People don't take basic steps to ensure evidence is preserved in some fashion even if it is just a photograph.

Sanderson pointed out that the physical evidence that had been reported, those skid marks on the ground, an oily substance on the grass, and the foul odor, might have been part of the normal environment. The type of grass growing wild in that area gave off a similar odor and the grass also seemed to be the source of the oil. Sanderson said that he couldn't find the skid marks, and knew of no one who had photographed them.

But here is the point. After the sighting, there were reports of skid marks on the ground and the recovery of some kind of oily substance. These are some of the same things that were reported about seventeen years later by Harold Butcher. Should the cases be linked by the types of evidence left behind? It is a tenuous link at best but it is still one that should be considered. In the Flatwoods Monster case, as it became known, the Air Force wrote it off as an astronomical phenomenon, namely a meteor.

Another case in which an oily substance was left behind was reported on October 23, 1965, when a radio announcer, Jerry Townsend, driving near Long Prairie, Minnesota, at about 7:15, p.m., spotted a rocket-shaped object sitting on the pavement. He said that it was thirty or forty feet tall, ten feet in diameter and sitting on its fins just as all the rocket ships ever shown in science fiction movies or on television have been. As he approached that rocket, his car engine died, the radio faded and the headlights dimmed. Remember, Butcher had also reported some of these same electromagnetic effects. The announcer said that he tried to start his car but failed. Then, according to the report he filed with Project Blue Book:

> I then got out of my car with the idea to go up to it and try to rock the center of gravity and topple it over so that I would have the evidence right there in black and white. I got to the front end of my car and stopped with no further interest in going further because three little "creatures" came from about behind and stood in front of the object. I think they were looking at me… I was quite fascinated

> with what I saw… I felt that if they could stop my car, they could surely do something worse to me and I wanted to live to tell the story so that the people of the United States would know that there were things of this nature. I can safely say that we "looked" at each other for about three minutes. Then they turned and went under the object and a few seconds later, the object started to rise slowly. After it was about one quarter mile high (this is only a guess), the light went out and my car engine started to run again (I did not have to tough the starter), and my headlights came on. I looked at the area that it had been sitting on over and could see no evidence that it had been on the ground. I then drove to the Todd County Sheriff's Office [Sheriff Jim Bain and police officer Lavern Lubitz] and reported what I had seen to the sheriff. He went back out to the spot and could not find anything on the road that would show they were on the ground. That is what happened…

Dr. J. Allen Hynek said that he personally investigated the case "via the telephone (Hynek, 1997)." He said that there were confirming witnesses to the object's take off. Several raccoon hunters, according to the sheriff, had seen "a light in the sky" at the time the object took off. There were apparently four other witnesses who might had seen the object take off. While there was no radar confirmation of the craft, other witnesses in nearby towns had seen it and that included the sheriff in Anoka.

Hynek's account does not describe the creatures reported by the witness, but several others did. According to Coral Lorenzen (1965), who spoke to Townsend in the days after the sighting, "When he got to the front of the car three little creatures which looked like tin cans on tripods and about six inches tall, came from behind the object. They had no discernible features. Townsend stopped in front of his car with no intention to go closer. He said that although he could detect no features, he felt the creatures were watching him."

Other, named witnesses, were also located. Ray Blessing, who was fourteen at the time, and using his reflector telescope that night, said that about 7:00 p.m. he had seen a "Buck Rogers-like thing" fly by. This was

about fifteen minutes before Townsend saw a similar shaped craft on the road.

Jim Bain, whose father had been the sheriff in 1965, provided some interesting detail. In an email written on October 15, 2015, Bain said that he was the son of the sheriff and his father would get together with another sheriff, John Stack of Morrison County, Minnesota. Bain said that he had been in the sheriff's office on the night that Townsend came in with the tale of seeing a spaceship. His immediate reaction was one of disbelief, but according to what he wrote later:

> My father went out to the site but he called the civil defense director at the time to ride with him… The director said he would bring his Geiger counter. When they got to the site the marks were visible and distinct and highly radioactive… A couple of weeks after this siting [sic] a gentleman from the government came and was talking to my father… This was not unusual for me to just walk in his office… if my father wanted me to leave he would say so but on this night he had so [sic] reason for me to leave. The conversation was basically over this space ship landing however in the conversation my father brought up another gentlemen [sic] who had directly seen the space ship but would not let his name be used. After bring[ing] this up they called the second individual and he agreed to speak to [the] government investigator… When we got to the home [where the witness lived we found] the hunter, his wife, son and investigator… [he said] "We had just let the dogs out and they took off across the field when this space ship came over them and lite up the ground like it was day…

The Air Force investigation seemed to be little more than sending the witness its UFO report form. There is nothing in the file about Hynek's investigation. There is a report, for information only, that was copied from *Saucer News*. In the end, the Air Force, as it did with most sightings that involved some sort of creatures or occupants, labeled the case as, "Other," with a handwritten notation of "psychological," meaning, of course, that the witness has some sort of mental problem.

The record card also noted that there was no physical evidence, which, of course, does not match the witness statements. The fact that this evidence was either overlooked or ignored is important. Bain reported that the marks that had been seen on the road were still there and they were highly radioactive. This alone should have interested the Air Force.

The point here is that the Butcher sighting, when isolated, is not all that impressive. A group of teenagers report something strange seen in the sky. Butcher reported the sort of EM Effects found in dozens of other UFO cases. There was an oily substance found, and there were skid marks on the ground as had been found in other cases, including the Zamora landing a little more than a year earlier. It is interesting that in all the work done by the Air Force during the twenty-two years of their investigation, they never bothered to look for linkage in the cases. They never bothered to actually look for patterns or similarities, believing, I suppose, that each sighting was a separate incident.

However, had they attempted to find patterns, had they looked for commonality among the cases, they may have learned something important. The Cherry Creek sightings by Harold Butcher and his friends and family, not to mention those by law enforcement officers, suggest that something was going on in the area. Had they noticed that, and the similarities with other UFO cases, even those that were years old, it might have changed their outlook on the overall phenomena.

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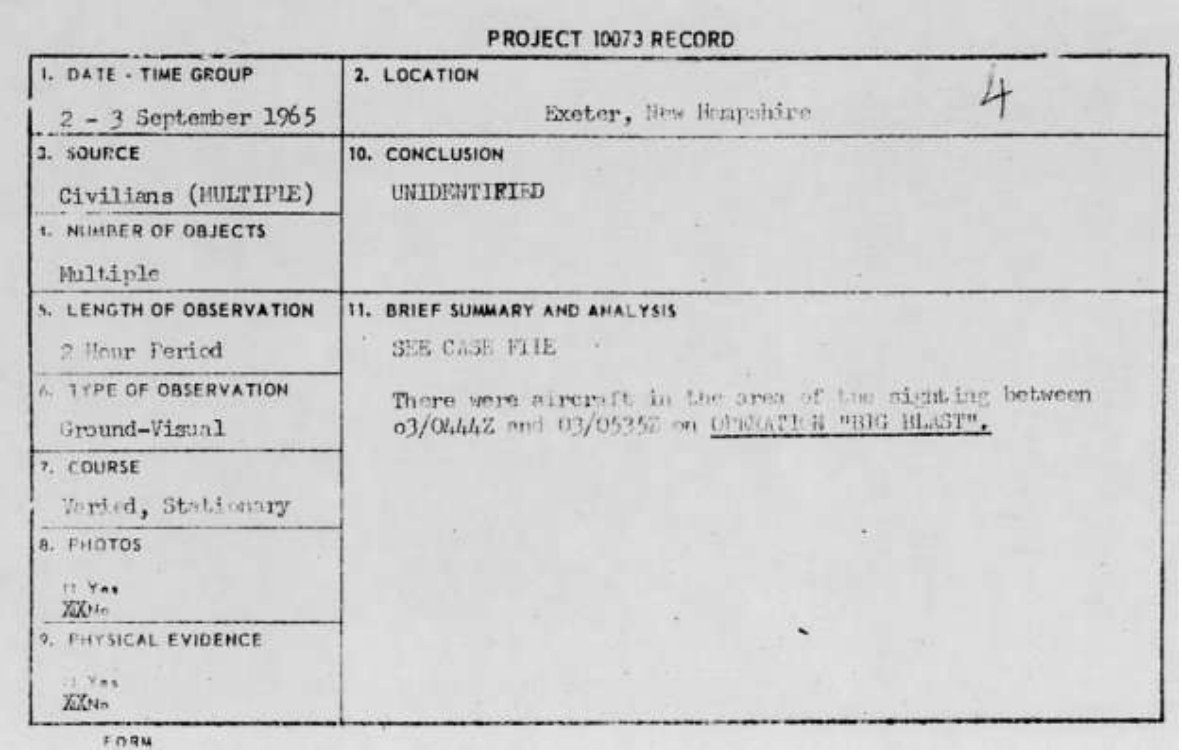
Chapter 13: Exeter, New Hampshire, September 3, 1965



PROJECT 10073 RECORD

1. DATE - TIME GROUP 2 - 3 September 1965	2. LOCATION Exeter, New Hampshire 4
3. SOURCE Civilians (MULTIPLE)	10. CONCLUSION UNIDENTIFIED
4. NUMBER OF OBJECTS Multiple	
5. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION 2 Hour Period	11. BRIEF SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS SEE CASE FILE There were aircraft in the area of the sighting between 03/0444Z and 03/0535Z on OPERATION "BIG BLAST".
6. TYPE OF OBSERVATION Ground-Visual	
7. COURSE Varied, Stationary	
8. PHOTOS Yes XXNo	
9. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE Yes XXNo	

FORM

Project Blue Book Project Card

Not all that long after Harold Butcher made his sighting in the Cherry Creek, New York area, and the Air Force investigated those events, another sighting, made by Norman Muscarello, took over the UFO news. On September 3, 1965, Muscarello, while hitchhiking near Kensington, New Hampshire, about two in the morning, first sighted a series of lights that seemed to be attached to a larger object. He thought it was about 80 to 90 feet in diameter; hovering about a hundred feet from him (Clark, 2018; Hynek, 1997; Klass, 1968; Fuller, 1966; NICAP, 1965; Blue Book).

The lights, blinking in some sort of sequence, seemed to be floating up and down, sometimes disappearing behind a copse of trees or a house. The lights were so bright that he couldn't see the object behind them.

While at first, he calmly watched the lights, he suddenly panicked as the lights moved toward him. Convinced that the lights were going to hit him, he dived to the ground. As the lights retreated Muscarello leaped to

his feet and ran to the nearest house. He banged on the door, screaming for help, but no one answered.

Although it was early in the morning, he spotted a car on the highway and flagged it down. He asked the couple to take him to the Exeter Police Station. He arrived at 2:24 a.m. and Muscarello ran into the station. The desk officer, Patrolman Reginald Toland, listened to the story of the obviously upset young man and then called Officer Eugene F. Bertrand, Jr., to come back to the station to interview Muscarello.

Bertrand, it seemed, earlier that morning, had found a woman sitting in her car, too terrified to move. He provided Project Blue Book with a written statement about that incident. “I found a woman in the car who stated she was too upset to drive. She stated a light had been following her and stopped over her car. I stayed with her for about 15 minutes but was unable to see anything.”

He provided more information about the sighting in other interviews given later. He said that she told him that a large object with flashing red lights had followed her for about twelve miles. It was only a few feet above her car. When she reached an overpass, the object suddenly rose and disappeared. Bertrand stayed with her until she was calm enough to finish her trip.

Listening to Muscarello, Bertrand realized that something strange was going on. To his way of thinking, first seeing the woman’s reaction and then Muscarello’s, he needed to investigate the situation for himself. Reluctantly Muscarello agreed to accompany him back to the area of his sighting to show him exactly where he’d seen the UFO.

When they reached the site, they could see nothing in the fields or in the sky above them. As they walked the field, with Bertrand shining his flashlight right and left, he wondered if Muscarello might have seen a helicopter. Muscarello said that he knew what a helicopter looked like and he had not heard the sound of either the engine or the rotor blades popping.

They hadn’t walked more than fifty feet when the horses in a corral near them began kicking at the sides of the barn. They noticed that dogs were howling. At about that time, Muscarello yelled, “I see it.”

Now Bertrand saw it was well. It was a “huge, dark object as big as that barn over there, with red flashing lights on it.” It flew over the tall trees, barely clearing them. That provided a perspective as to its size. He pulled his weapon and aimed at the object but decided not to fire. The

better idea might be for them to get out of the field. He grabbed Muscarello, who seemed to be paralyzed, and dragged him back to the patrol car.

From the car, they watched the object as it hovered about 100 feet away and about 100 feet above the ground. With the pulsating red lights flashing in rapid sequence, from right to left and then left to right, it rocked back and forth. Bertrand said that he had the impression the object was “an intelligently constructed vehicle.” He said the brilliance of the lights created a halo effect and that it was so bright he couldn’t look directly at it.

Bertrand watched as the object began to dart around, as if it could turn on a dime. John Fuller, who wrote the book, *Incident at Exeter*, reported that Bertrand said:

> I could see that fluttering movement. It was going from left to right, between the tops of two big trees. I could see those pulsating lights. I could hear those horses kicking out in the barn there. Those dogs were really howling. Then it started moving, slow-like, across the tops of the trees, just above the trees. It was rocking when it did this. A creepy type of look. Airplanes don’t do this. After it moved out of sight, toward Hampton, toward the ocean, we waited a while. A B-47 came over. You could tell the difference.

One of the points that is important here is that Bertrand reported on the actions of the animals near the scene. Harold Butcher had reported that a bull, tethered near the barn, reacted violently when the UFO was near. It pulled at the metal rod that secured it, bending it at a 45-degree angle in its attempt to get away.

Bertrand called for another police officer, David Hunt, who said he was on the way. According to the NICAP *UFO Investigator*, Hunt arrived in time to watch the object for about six minutes. By that time, it was moving away but he saw the pulsating red lights that he described as brighter than the headlights of a car at close range.

Hunt also provided a short statement for the officers of Project Blue Book. He wrote:

> I, David R. Hunt, at about 0255 on the morning of the 3rd of September, received a call from Patrolman Bertrand to report to an area about 3 miles South West of Exeter, N.H. Upon arriving at the scene, I observed a group of bright red lights flashing in sequence. They appeared to be about ½ mile over a field to the South East.

After observing the lights for a short period of time, they moved off in a South Easterly direction and disappeared in the distance. The lights appeared to remain at the same altitude which I estimate to be about 100 ft.

When the next shift arrived at the police station, Lieutenant Warren Cottrell read the report about the sighting. A 1:00 p.m. that afternoon, Air Force Major David H. Griffin and Lieutenant Alan Brandt arrived to interview the witnesses.

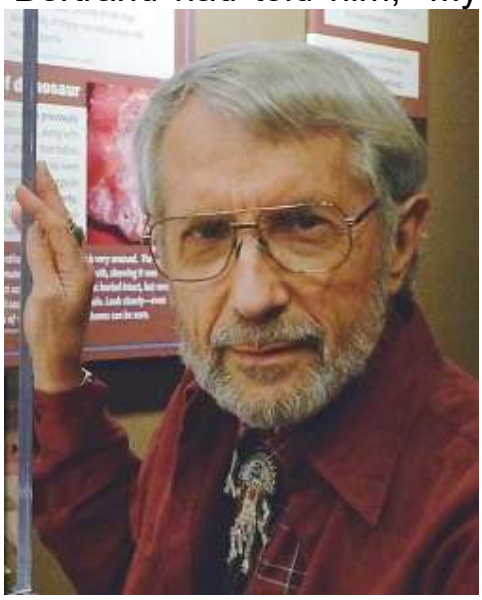
Norman Muscarello, David Hunt, Eugene Bertrand and radio dispatcher Toland, seated.

Given that Air Force Regulations required that Air Force personnel refer all questions of all sightings that have no immediate and obvious explanation to the public affairs office at the Pentagon, Griffin and Brandt asked that the witnesses say nothing to the press. The problem was that a reporter knew of the sighting almost as it happened and actually interviewed the police officers that morning, before the Air Force officers arrived.

Ray Fowler, a NICAP investigator, also interviewed the police officers. In a report that appeared in *The UFO Investigator*, Fowler said that the

Air Force officers seemed to be interested in the size and shape of the object. He also said that the police officers were told that an Air Force check found no aircraft in the area at the time and the Pease Air Force Base had been receiving UFO reports from New Hampshire for the week prior to the sighting. It doesn't seem that many of these sightings made it to Project Blue Book which means that they were not investigated.

John Fuller published more details of the sighting after he had talked with the police officers. Fuller reported that Bertrand had told him, "My brain kept telling me this doesn't happen – but there it was right in front of my eyes… it hovered there, about 100 feet away… I don't know what it was. All I can say is that it was there, and three of us saw it together."



Ray Stanford

The Air Force in Washington, D.C., had the answer. They suggested that what the witnesses had seen were "stars and planets twinkling." There was a temperature inversion over the area and this inversion layer was responsible for the odd look of these stars and planets. This is, of course, the same explanation they used to explain the Washington Nationals years earlier. This wouldn't be their final conclusion.

Those at Blue Book at Wright-Patterson AFB in Ohio, had a different answer, which isn't all that surprising. They blamed the sighting on an Air Force training mission that was flown on September 2 – 3. This was an operation called "Big Blast," a SAC/NORAD Air Force exercise. Exeter was in the traffic pattern used by the Air Force for the recovery of the aircraft at Pease AFB, N.H. They thought that the lights on the aircraft as they entered the traffic pattern that would have included red and green

navigation lights and a flashing red anti-collision light, not to mention the landing lights, might have caused the confusion.

Major Hector Quintanilla, chief of Blue Book at the time, originally thought this a good explanation, though he had yet to make a final evaluation. He sent a letter to the two police officers. He wrote:

> In addition to aircraft from this operation, there were five (5) B-47 aircraft flying in the area during this period… Since there were many aircraft in the area, at the time, and there were no reports of unidentified objects from personnel engaged in this air operation, we might then assume that the objects observed between midnight and two a.m. might be associated with this military air operation. If, however, these aircraft were noted by either of you, this would tend to eliminate this air operation as a possible explanation for the objects observed (Blue Book).

Neither of the police officers were impressed with Quintanilla's seeming hasty evaluation of their sighting. In a lengthy response that was apparently written by Bertrand but signed by both of them, Bertrand wrote:

Refueling aircraft.

> As you might imagine, we have been the subject of considerable ridicule since the Pentagon released its "final evaluation" of our sighting… In other words, both Patrolman Hunt and myself saw this object at close range, checked it out with each other, confirmed and reconfirmed the fact that this was not any kind of conventional aircraft, that it was at an altitude of not more than a couple of

hundred feet and went to considerable trouble to confirm the weather was clear, there was no wind, no chance of weather inversion, and that what was in no way a military or civilian aircraft… Since our job depends on accuracy and the ability to tell the difference between fact and fiction, we were naturally disturbed by the Pentagon report issued which attributed the sightings to “multiple high-altitude objects in the area” and “weather inversion.” What is difficult to understand is that your letter arrived considerably after the Pentagon release. Since your letter says that you are still in the process of making a final evaluation, it seems that there is an inconsistency here. Ordinarily, this would not be too important except for the fact that in a situation like this, we are naturally very reluctant to be considered irresponsible in our official report to the police station. One of us (Patrolman Bertrand) was in the Air Force for four years, engaged in refueling operations, with all kinds of military aircraft; it was impossible to mistake what we saw for any kind of military operation, regardless of altitude. It was also definitely not a helicopter or balloon. Immediately after the object disappeared, we did see what probably was a B-47 at high altitudes, but it bore no relation to the object that we saw.

Another fact is that the time of our observation was nearly an hour after two a.m. which would eliminate the Air Force Operation Big Blast since as you say, this took place between midnight and two a.m. Norman Muscarello, who first reported this object before we went to the site, saw it somewhere in the vicinity of two a.m. but nearly an hour had passed before he got to the police station and we went out to the location with him.

Lieutenant Colonel John Spaulding, who served with the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force, added his voice to the controversy. He wrote, “Based on additional information submitted to our UFO Investigation Officer, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, we have been unable to identify the object that you observed on September 5, 1965 (Blue Book).”

While the Air Force seemed to stumble in their investigation, newspapers around the Exeter area reported that the UFO had finally be identified. It was an advertising plane. That it was flying around at two in the morning when there would be few people to see any advertising seemed to be lost on the reporters. Ray Fowler had already looked into that explanation. He learned that there had been no advertising planes

flying in the area between August 21 and September 10. Not only that, but the plane had no flashing red lights on the display. Only white lights mounted on a rectangular sign.

Philip Klass entered the controversy with his book, *UFOs – Identified*. He believed that the witnesses did see something. It just wasn't an alien spacecraft. He postulated that it was a clear-weather plasma, which is a cloud of ionized air generated by electrical discharges from powerlines and there were powerlines near the scene of the sighting. Klass wrote that these plasma clouds could expand to huge size and seem to "wander" over the fields under their own power. Atmospheric scientists rejected the theory quickly, citing many errors in Klass' science. Klass just as quickly abandoned the theory without fanfare.

Klass' theory wasn't the only one that didn't make much sense. Martin Kottemeyer suggested that the whole thing was started by someone flying a lighted kite. There were five strobe lights attached to the tail of a box kite. No evidence, and no one, ever surfaced to verify this claim. The observations by the police officers would tend to negate this explanation as well.

The story became even more complicated years later. Larry Fawcett and Barry Greenwood reported they had learned of another sighting earlier on September 2, 1965, but that was not reported until 1982. The Chief of Police in Hampton, New Hampshire, Robert Mark told them of a sighting while he was assigned to

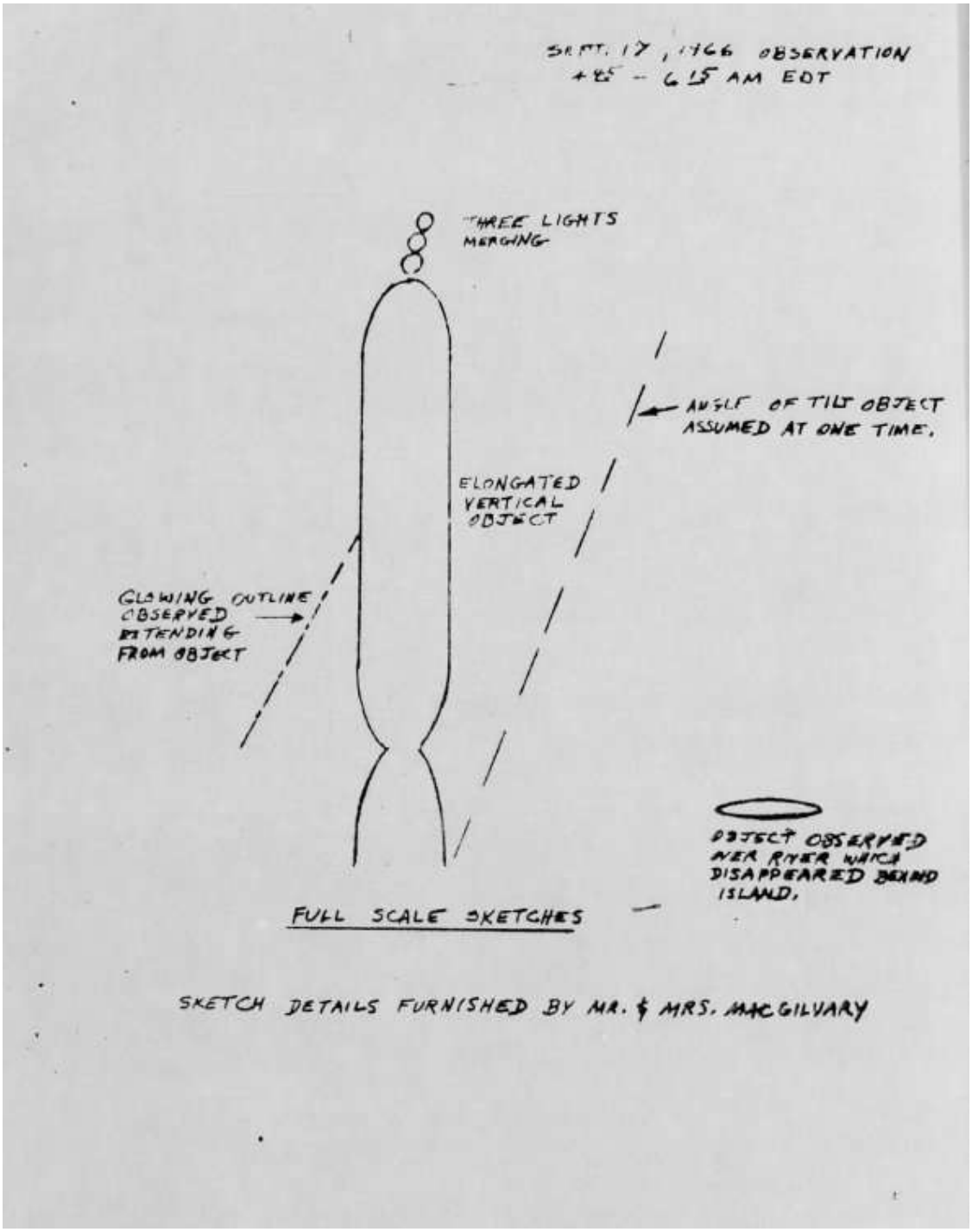
High tension lines which can create ionized air and corona displays.

the 509th Security Police (the same 509th that

had been caught up in the Roswell UFO crash nearly twenty years earlier) at Pease AFB while he was a sergeant in the Air Force. He told them:

> It was about 12 a.m. when I and two other airmen were at the Main gate to Pease. One of the airmen yelled, “Look at that.” I turned around to see an object drop out of the star-filled sky. It was coming straight towards the guard shack at an altitude of about 300 to 400 feet. The lights were approaching at a very fast rate of speed. What I saw as the object was coming straight on, was what looked like two headlights that were very bright.
>
> As the object passed over the lighted areas of the base, the lights would go out as if someone were breaking the bulbs as they went by. It passed directly over the guard shack, but the men could not hear a sound, only the wind. When I first saw the two bright headlights drop out of the sky and come towards the shack, I thought it was a B-52 approaching, but this was dismissed when there was no sound whatsoever.
>
> One of the airmen ran for the shack and grabbed the red hotline phone, which is a direct to CSC [Central Security Control]. He began crying and yelling into the phone about what he was seeing. Then he dropped to his knees and lost all control of himself. I had to grab the phone away from him and shake the airman, telling him to control himself, that the thing was not going to kill him. As this was going on, the object headed towards the north end of Pease. When it flew over, the lights there went out also. Then remained out for about 30 to 40 seconds, then came back on. The whole area was black when the object passed over (Fawcett and Greenwood, 1984).

Mark described the object as being elongated, but the bright lights on it made it impossible to see any more detail about the size and shape. He also remembered running to the radar tower in time to see two fighters take off. He heard radio transmissions from the fighters. One of the pilots said, “I can’t get them. They’re too fast.”


SEPT. 17, 1966 OBSERVATION
+15 - 6 15 AM EDT
THREE LIGHTS MERGING
ANGLE OF TILT OBJECT ASSUMED AT ONE TIME.
ELONGATED VERTICAL OBJECT
GLOWING OUTLINE OBSERVED EXTENDING FROM OBJECT
OBJECT OBSERVED OVER RIVER WHICH DISAPPEARED BEHIND ISLAND.
FULL SCALE SKETCHES
SKETCH DETAILS FURNISHED BY MR. & MRS. MACGILVARY

Project Blue Book illustration of object reported by a witness.

Here was a sighting that took place on Pease AFB, yet there is nothing about it in the Project Blue Book files. Officials at Pease denied that there had been any sightings on the base or attempts at an intercept during the whole of the Exeter episode even though stories circulated on the base about sightings and attempts at interception.

During Fuller's investigation into the Exeter sighting, he interviewed one woman who told him:

> On the 17th of September… we were going up to Exeter. This thing with red, green and white lights on it stopped over a house. We watched it for two or three minutes, and then a jet plane came. And when it did, every single light on the object went out. The plane went by, and the lights came on again. The plane came back, and the lights went out. Then the object went off, and the plane remained there circling…

Though there were three witnesses named in the original report, the woman who had been stopped by the side of the road was never identified. And during this period, there were dozens of other sightings in the area. Some of them might have been misidentifications of mundane objects while others weren't reported to the Air Force. Other sightings that should have been part of Project Blue Book, such as that described by Robert Mark at Pease AFB, were not part of the investigation. It would have added another level of credibility to the sighting reports. In the end, the Air Force found no plausible explanation and labeled the case as "Unidentified."

Long after John Fuller's book, *Incident at Exeter*, was published and after Blue Book was closed in 1969, CSICOP (now officially known as CSI) declared that they had solved the case. James McGaha, a former Air Force pilot and now a civilian astronomer and Joe Nickell, an investigator and science writer, decided to reinvestigate the case (McGaha and Nickell, 2011). They looked at it as a cold case, discussing the details and looking at the information published in various sources including the now nearly universally available Project Blue Book files.

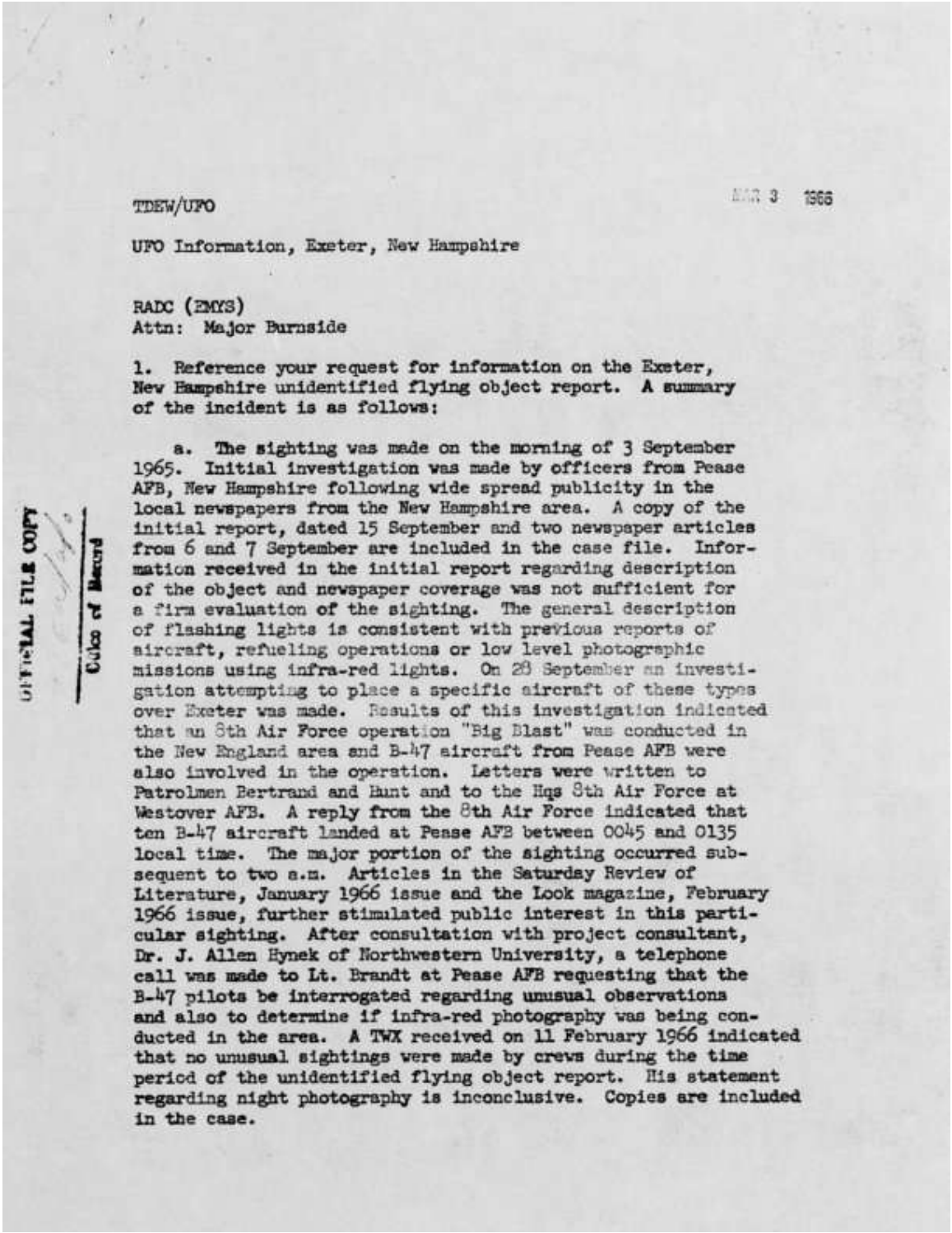
McGaha brought a unique experience to the case. As an Air Force pilot, he had actually engaged in refueling operations and thought that he recognized the sequencing of the lights reported by Hunt. McGaha visited an aerospace museum where he saw a mothballed KC-97 refueling aircraft. On the fuselage was an array of five red sequencing lights that would reflect on the boom of the refueling probe. This, according to them, is the type of aircraft that would have been operating from Pease AFB in 1965 and would "surely have been involved in a SAC/NORAD training exercise like that dubbed 'Big Blast'…"

To fully understand their theory, they supplied more information about how refueling operations were conducted. They wrote:

> The airborne refueling process of the KC-97 is both interesting and relevant. Briefly, it involved the KC-97 making long circuits of the rendezvous area. As the jet to be refueled began to approach, the boom was lowered and the receiver (sequencing) lights were turned on. However, when the jet was in very close proximity, the receiver lights were turned low; otherwise the extreme brightness would temporarily blind the approaching pilot. (The sequencing stopped as the aircraft hooked up.) There would be some jockeying as the two planes connected, and all of this could look exceedingly strange to an observer on the ground.
>
> Thus, on one of its long passes the slow-moving KC-97 could have seemed to be "chasing" the first eyewitness on Route 101 [the upset woman in the parked car]. It was subsequently seen by young Muscarello and, later still, Bertrand, with its boom down at its characteristic angle. This boom, with bore its own small wings… would actually flutter in the air currents (except when specifically being controlled by the boom operator), which no doubt explains Muscarello's statement that the UFO "acted at times like a floating leaf." Most notable were the tanker's five red lights, which were flashing – in the sequence accurately described by the two witnesses – one, two, three, four, three, two one. The extreme brightness of the lights, rendering other features of the object indistinguishable from the ground, is further corroborative evidence of the UFO's identification as a KC-97 refueling plane….
>
> We believe this solves the so-called incident at Exeter. As to the weeks of subsequent UFO reports in the vicinity, they were beyond the scope of our investigation. (See [John] Fuller [*Incident at Exeter*]1966; [Robert] Sheaffer [*The UFO Verdict*] 1986, 111-19.) As our work shows, "cold cases" may be solvable with perseverance and some luck, keeping in mind that luck is most likely to come to those who go looking for it.

The problem with this analysis is that for it to work, some of the information from the original investigation that appears in the Blue Book file must be ignored. For example, Bertrand, in one of the letters sent to Hector Quintanilla after the sighting, wrote, "One of us (Patrolman Bertrand) was in the Air Force for four years, engaged in refueling operations, with all kinds of military aircraft; it was impossible to mistake what we saw for any kind of military operation, regardless of altitude."

While it might be argued that neither Muscarello nor Hunt would be familiar with refueling operations and therefore fooled by seeing one late at night,



TDEW/UFO

MAR 3 1966

UFO Information, Exeter, New Hampshire

RADC (EMYS)
Attn: Major Burnside

1. Reference your request for information on the Exeter, New Hampshire unidentified flying object report. A summary of the incident is as follows:

a. The sighting was made on the morning of 3 September 1965. Initial investigation was made by officers from Pease AFB, New Hampshire following wide spread publicity in the local newspapers from the New Hampshire area. A copy of the initial report, dated 15 September and two newspaper articles from 6 and 7 September are included in the case file. Information received in the initial report regarding description of the object and newspaper coverage was not sufficient for a firm evaluation of the sighting. The general description of flashing lights is consistent with previous reports of aircraft, refueling operations or low level photographic missions using infra-red lights. On 28 September an investigation attempting to place a specific aircraft of these types over Exeter was made. Results of this investigation indicated that an 8th Air Force operation "Big Blast" was conducted in the New England area and B-47 aircraft from Pease AFB were also involved in the operation. Letters were written to Patrolmen Bertrand and Hunt and to the Hqs 8th Air Force at Westover AFB. A reply from the 8th Air Force indicated that ten B-47 aircraft landed at Pease AFB between 0045 and 0135 local time. The major portion of the sighting occurred subsequent to two a.m. Articles in the Saturday Review of Literature, January 1966 issue and the Look magazine, February 1966 issue, further stimulated public interest in this particular sighting. After consultation with project consultant, Dr. J. Allen Hynek of Northwestern University, a telephone call was made to Lt. Brandt at Pease AFB requesting that the B-47 pilots be interrogated regarding unusual observations and also to determine if infra-red photography was being conducted in the area. A TWX received on 11 February 1966 indicated that no unusual sightings were made by crews during the time period of the unidentified flying object report. His statement regarding night photography is inconclusive. Copies are included in the case.

OFFICIAL FILE COPY
Office of Record

Project Blue Book synopsis of the original sighting.

Bertrand would have recognized it for what it was. He had participated in such operations, been familiar with the lighting configurations, and the techniques of such operations.

There is also a problem with timing. While it seems that the first sighting by the woman on the road fell within the time limits of the refueling operations, those second sightings by Muscarello, Bertrand and Hunt did not. That would suggest that while it might have been possible for the woman to have mistaken such an operation for something following her for twelve miles, the subsequent sightings did not. It also seems unlikely that the refueling aircraft would have been in a position to give the impression that it was following her for twelve miles, given the relative speeds of the two vehicles, meaning her car and the refueling aircraft. The higher the altitude, the less likely it is that she would have believed that she was being followed.

None of the witnesses mentioned anything about sound. Although it is often difficult to judge distances at night without some sort of visual cue, it is also true that the three men had those visual cues. They reported the object close to the ground and close to them. In fact, at one point it was so close that Muscarello and Bertrand fled to the safety of the patrol car. This would suggest that had the object been a refueling aircraft it was dangerously low, in violation of various military and FAA regulations, and would have been making enough noise that it would have suggested jet aircraft rather than a silent alien craft.

As McGaha and Nickell noted, Bertrand and Hunt did see a B-47 at altitude after the sighting was over, suggesting that the training exercise was still in progress. However, Hector Quintanilla had reported, “If, however, these aircraft were noted by either of you, this would tend to eliminate this air operation as a possible explanation for the objects observed (Blue Book).”

These facts, and the other sightings reported in the area, including that given to Fawcett and Greenwood much later (but were available to McGaha and Nickell for their analysis) argue against the refueling solution.

Although their solution does fit some of the observations by the witnesses, they don’t account for all of them. There are too many gaps in the theory for it to be a plausible solution. That takes us back to the original Air Force analysis which is that there is no good solution for the sighting. It remains as “Unidentified.”

SOURCES:

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Fuller, John C. Incident at Exeter: *The Story of Unidentified Flying Objects Over America Today*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1966.

Hynek, J. Allen. *The Hynek UFO Report*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1997.

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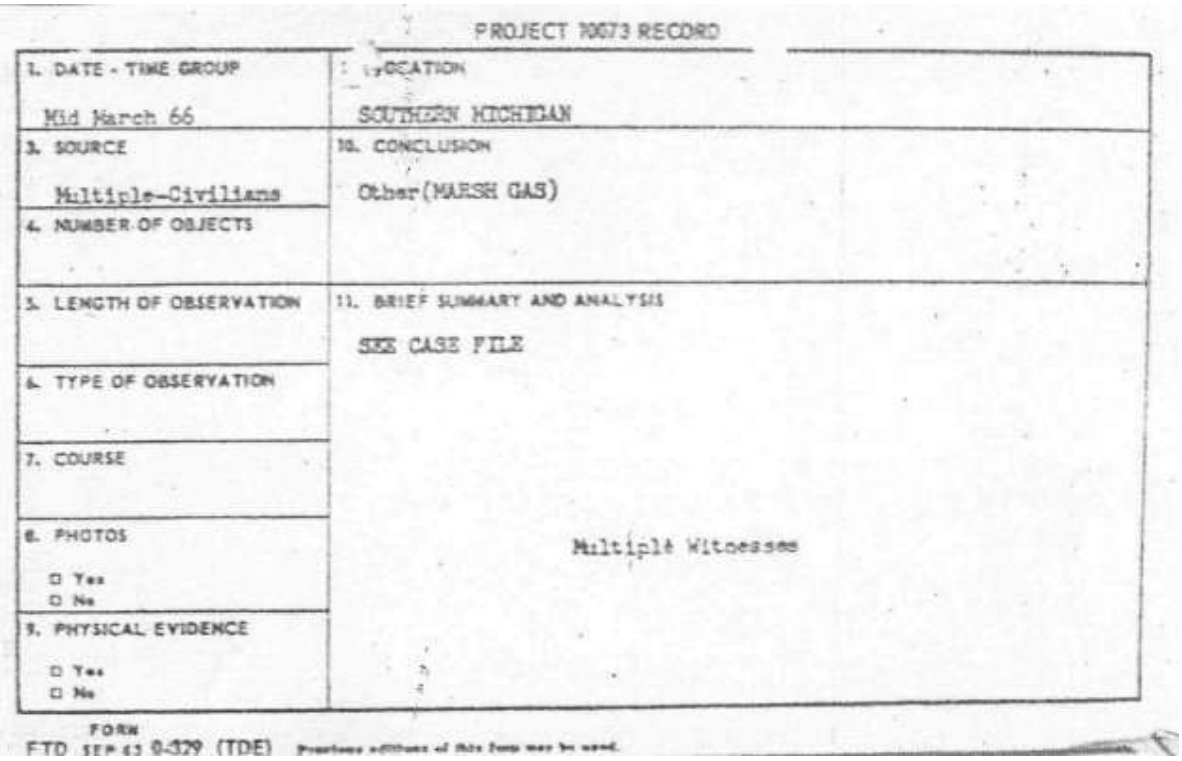
McGaha, James and Joe Nickell. "'Exeter Incident' Solved! A Classic UFO Case Forty-Five Years 'Cold.'" *Skeptical Inquirer* 35,6 (November/December 2011). https://skepticalinquirer.org/2011/11/exeter_incident_solved_a_classic_ufo case_forty_five_years_cold/ Accessed June 12, 2019.

Project Blue Book. Roll No. 57 Case No. 9891

"UFOs Panic Police, Motorists." *The U.F.O. Investigator*, (August/September 1965): 1, 3-4.

Chapter 14: The Michigan Sightings, March 1966



PROJECT 10073 RECORD

1. DATE - TIME GROUP Mid March 66	2. LOCATION SOUTHERN MICHIGAN
3. SOURCE Multiple-Civilians	10. CONCLUSION Other(MARSH GAS)
4. NUMBER OF OBJECTS	
5. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION	11. BRIEF SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS SEE CASE FILE
6. TYPE OF OBSERVATION	
7. COURSE	
8. PHOTOS ☐ Yes ☐ No	Multiple Witnesses
9. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE ☐ Yes ☐ No	

FORM
FTD SEP 63 0-329 (TDE)

Project Blue Book Project Card

Although main sightings took place beginning on March 20, 1966, around Dexter, Michigan, the first of the reports were made on March 14. At 3:50 a.m. a flurry of sightings began in which disk-shaped objects were seen performing maneuvers in the area. Officials at Selfridge Air Force Base allegedly confirmed radar sightings over Lake Erie at 4:56 a.m. Two sheriff's deputies, Corporal Broderick and Deputy Patterson serving with the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Department, created a log of the sightings which is one of the few official documents that exist. Newspapers also provided some of the information, though Project Blue Book seemed to have missed these first sightings completely (Hall).

Washtenaw County Deputies Buford Bushroe and John Foster, riding in their patrol car southwest of Ann Arbor, Michigan, said they watched a disc that flashed red and green lights, moving rapidly across the sky. After making sharp turns it headed off to the northwest. Bushroe later said, "At first, it was just one. It looked like a bluish-green star with red

flashes. It would swing back and forth like a pendulum, then shoot upward at tremendous speed, hover and then come down fast." They watched it for about fifteen minutes. (*Detroit News*, March 14).

Bushroe contacted a Dexter two-man patrol car and Livingston County patrol car that held two other deputy sheriffs. Bushroe asked them to look for the objects. These four additional officers said they had seen the same objects "engaging in the same maneuvers."

Howell, Michigan, Patrolman Charles Mason, overhearing the reports on the police radio, drove to the highest nearby point, the I-96 overpass. Over the city, he saw an object similar to that described by the other police officers. Mason thought it was low, but Bushroe said that he believed it to be at 10,000 feet. It might be that Mason was looking at it from a different perspective.

Then at 5:30 a.m., Deputy Sheriff Patterson, while in the office, looked out the window and saw a bright light that seemed to be over the Ypsilanti. Although it looked like a star, it was moving from the north to the east.

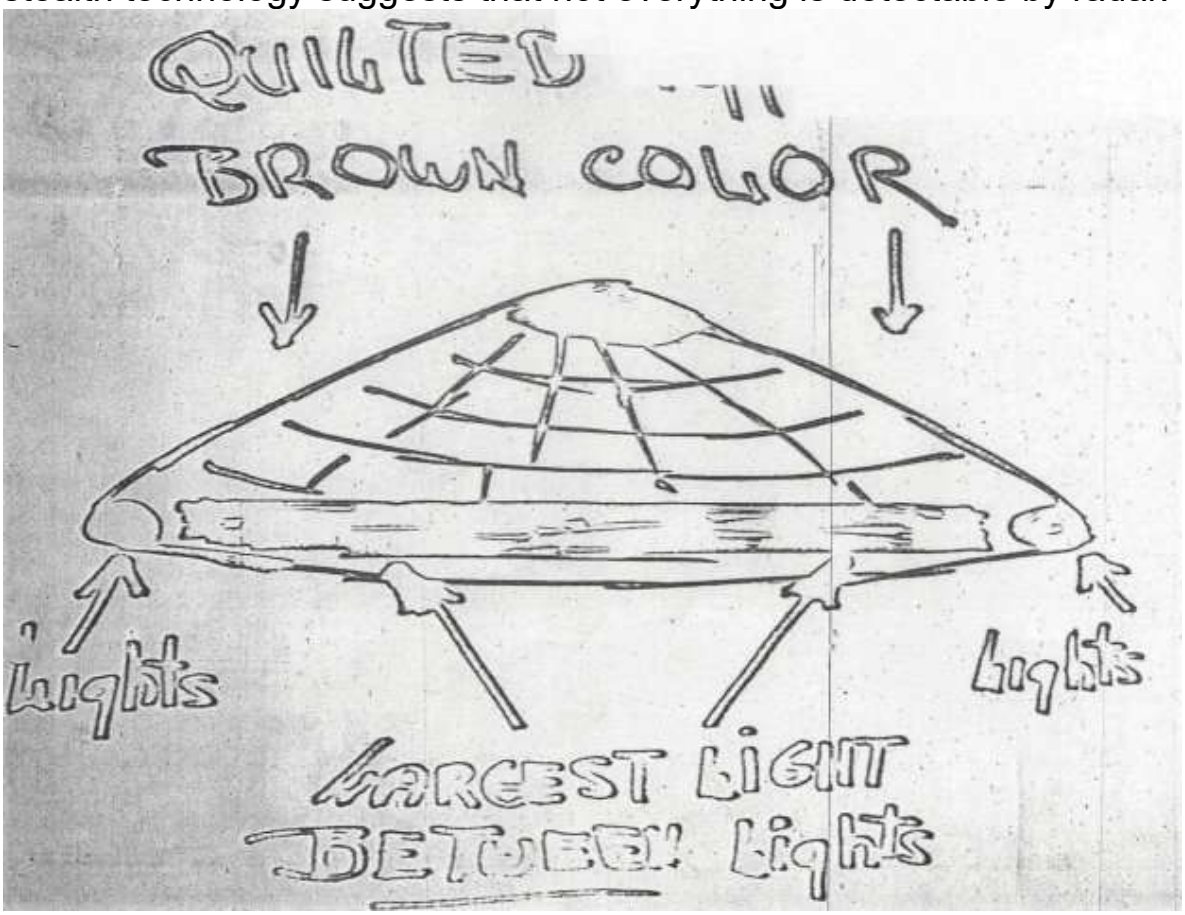
Appended to the report found in the police log book, is a statement made by Bushroe and Foster. "This is the strangest thing that [we] have ever witnessed. We would not have believed this story if we hadn't seen it with our own eyes. These objects could move at fantastic speeds and make very sharp turns, dive and climb, and hover with great maneuverability. We had no idea what these objects were, or where they could have come from… [A]t 5:30 these objects went out of view, and were not seen again."

At 4:30 a.m., the county civil defense director, Colonel Miller, was called and told about the sightings around the area. He wasn't sure what he should do about it. He apparently didn't see anything himself.

Interestingly, at 6:15 a.m., the police log noted that there had been no confirmation from Selfridge AFB. This seemed to be confirmed in *The A.P.R.O. Bulletin,* "Selfridge AFB was notified and although radar men had observed them visually, they said, their radar had not picked them up. At about 5:30 a.m., the two maneuvering UAOs were joined by two more and all four flew off in a northwesterly direction."

Given the statement provided by Bushroe, the way the log was created might be the source of this contradiction. Bushroe was told that the radar operators had seen the UFOs and he believed they had been tracked by radar. The Lorenzens, having investigated the case later,

learned that they had visually sighted the UFOs, but had not tracked them on radar. Just a minor misunderstanding, that is not overwhelmingly important. Having the UFOs tracked on radar would have added another dimension to the case and the development of stealth technology suggests that not everything is detectable by radar.



Witness description of the saucer. Illustration from the Blue Book files.

Although these sightings are not part of the Blue Book investigations there are other sightings from the same general area reported about the same time. The Blue Book files contain a letter from a 13-year-boy, living in the Trenton, Michigan area, who saw an object at about 5:30 a.m. on March 14. According to his letter:

> I'm a Detroit Free Press carrier in Trenton, Michigan and I get up quit [sic] early in the morning to deliver the newspaper. On the morning of March 14, 1966 at about 5:30 in the morning I was just starting my route when I happened to look towards the W.J.R. radio tower. I usually look for the constellation [sic] Gemini. Well, as I was looking at the tower I saw whitish blue object about the size of a

basketball (evidently they were much bigger because I was looking at it from a distance) and flying at terrific speed. At first I thought it was a meter [sic] or a falling star or some other explainable thing – but then [sic] my thoughts changed. It began dodging around the radio station (tower)… It came from the west out of the blue as they say and progressed steadily. It slowed down and then made almost a 90 degree turn going straight up and climbed to about 12000 feet and then went into a dive heading straight down and going fast. It pulled out and flew west again and then all of a sudden it turned and went east and into another dive, turned around and went west again. Just before it was coming to the tower it made another almost 90 degree turn and went up until it turned to the east and flew away.

I watched for about ten minutes from the time it first came into view until it flew out of sight…

There weren't any visible burning lights like the other UFO's [sic] have had on them but, I noticed something unusual every time [sic] it speeded up. The whitish blue began to fade. I didn't think much of it until I read in the paper about sending any information of theses sightings into the nearest Air Force Base or Project Blue Book. I never used to believe in them but I sure do now. I'd like to know who or what they are and where they come from that's all.

The Air Force did "investigate" the case which is to say that they sent the boy one of their long report forms. There is no indication in the file that they talked to him about the sighting or attempted to learn anything more about it even after receiving the completed form. Since there is no indication that Blue Book bothered to investigate the other sightings made by law enforcement officers at the same time, it would seem that they weren't overly interested in the multiple witness nature of the case. Although Dexter is northwest of Ann Arbor, Trent is to the southeast, which means little when investigating some sort of flying object.

Once they had their form back, they decided that there was "conflicting data" in the report, apparently uninterested in the fact the witness was only thirteen. The project card said, "Observer saw [similar] object 6 weeks earlier. Conflicting data noted when observer states in one place object did not disappear and in another it did."

It apparently didn't occur to the officer that the questionnaire might have been somewhat confusing, especially for a 13-year-old. That could account for the conflicting data. But, as mentioned, it didn't seem they

followed up on the case because they didn't know about the other sightings.

Three days later, from Milan, Michigan, came the report from two law enforcement officers, Sergeant Neil Schneider and Deputy David Fitzpatrick, who made a report to Blue Book. They said they saw "top-shaped objects" making sharp maneuvers. They would hover, climb and dive, and darted around at high speed, their lights dimming and brightening periodically. They reported that two objects were maneuvering together while a third hovered at a lower altitude.

According to the report prepared by Major F.L. Brokaw, who was the Chief, Base Operations and Training Division, the witnesses saw the object three times during the sighting. The first time it was just lights flying over and then hovering above Milan at about 200 feet. The second time the lights were flying about forty feet above their vehicle.

The object was about fifty feet in diameter, was olive drab or brown and had no discernable features over than a waffle pattern on the surface. The officers reported a slight smoke trail when it accelerated and the heard a whistling sound. There were blue, green, and white lights around the base of the object. They also reported that the car radio failed.

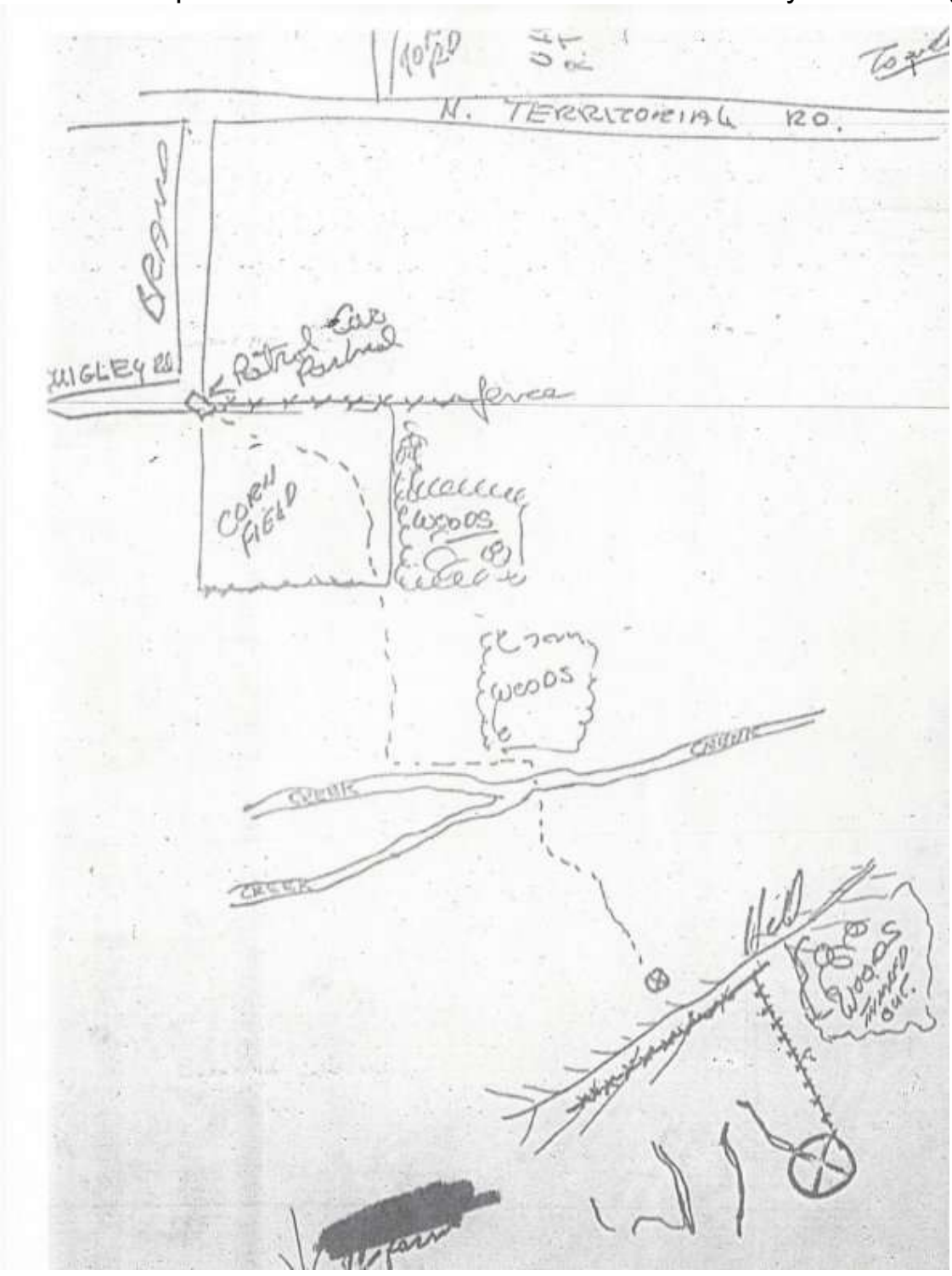
They said the first time the object disappeared to the northeast flying slowly. The second time, it just "went straight up." And the final time it flew off to the southeast. The first sighting lasted for an hour and a half. The second for ten to fifteen minutes and the last was the shortest. The object was in sight for only two to three minutes.

The sighting was labeled as "Insufficient data," because there was no weather and no directions to the object, meaning that the directions were vague. There were other notes on the card. It mentioned that the sightings took place on March 17, March 21 and on June 13. And that the "observer was considered reliable."

To return to a common theme, it should be noted that these sightings, were not adequately investigated, according to a report written by Hynek. He wrote, "However, there were reports of odd sightings, particularly in the Milan area, a few nights previous to the sightings here discussed [the Frank Mannor and Hillsboro sightings to be discussed later]. It would have taken an army of investigators to have exhaustively looked into all of these (Blue Book)."

This is a somewhat strange remark. The Air Force did have access to enough investigators or to active duty officers to mount just such an investigation even if it required several dozen officers. Hynek's remark seems to suggest that the Air Force and by extension, Project Blue Book, just didn't bother. Hynek had gathered the names of many of the law enforcement officers who had made sightings. Rather than interview them, Blue Book sent the 13-year-old boy a form.

The real point is that the Air Force did have an “army” of investigators



available.

Map of the sighting area found in the Blue Book files.

Air Force Regulations provided for the use of Air Force intelligence assets in UFO investigations. In addition to that, nearly every Air Force base

had an officer assigned the additional duty of UFO investigation. And, had it been necessary, they could have called on the security police at the base and, of course, the Office of Special Investigation. They had the assets. They simply did not deploy them.

The Michigan sightings, which had been reported locally, then gained national attention on March 20 when both Robert Wagner and Frank Mannor, saw a strange flying object in a swampy area. Mannor, members of his family, and dozens of others reported a domed disc with a "quilted" or "waffle" surface was seen close to the ground near Dexter. Mannor, who was 47 at the time, had ventured into a swamp near his home to try to identify an object hovering there. He was accompanied by his 19-year-old son, Ronald.

They had first seen, what they originally called a ball of fire, at about 8:30 p.m. that came from the west and fell below a clump of trees. Although there were several other witnesses available, Mannor's wife, and his two daughters and their husbands were there, only Mannor and his son headed out, into the swamp. They were able to get within 500 yards of the object but did get a good look at it.

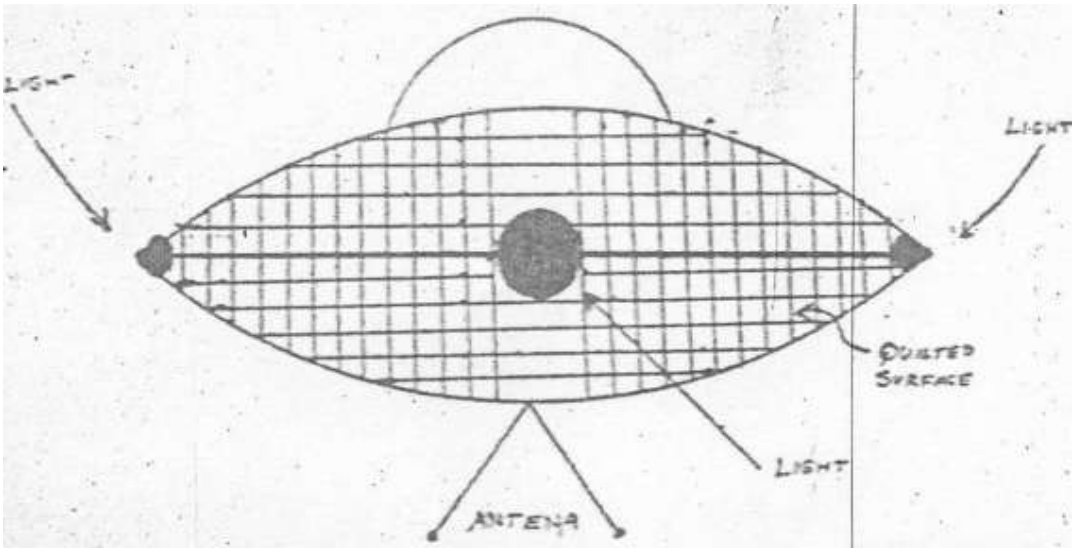
According to *The A.P.R.O. Bulletin*, Mannor said that they didn't have either weapons or lights. He added:

> … We came over that knoll and there it was, about eye-level with us, no more than 500 yards away. It had a blue light in front, and in the back a light that kept changing from red to white, like it was rotating.
>
> It was almost flat on the bottom and kind of high and peaked at the top. We couldn't see much except the outline and the lights at the ends, because the whole thing was wrapped in a light like a halo and it kept shimmering. It was like watching something across the desert… Ronnie said, "Look at that horrible thing there!' – And just like that it was gone. We went down into the swamp but there was nothing. No smell of exhaust. Nothing.

Mannor provided additional details about the object. He said it was about the size of a car, with a raised portion on top and a twin antenna on the bottom. Illustrations of the object, based on witness descriptions

showed the surfaced seemed to be cross-hatched, or waffle like. He also described it as pyramid shaped but the drawings show a domed disk.

Back at the house, Mannor's wife, Leona, had called the police. According to the police log, "Complainant called and stated that there was a strange object in the swamp at the end of [the road]. It was on the ground, went up in the air about 500 feet and came down, making a lot of noise."



Mannor's quilted saucer.

Interviewed later, she said, "You could see it rise from the ground and hit the treetop awhile and fall back to the ground. It would be different colors, white on the ground, blue, then red, in the trees and then come down and change color again." (*Detroit News*, March 21)

Deputies from the Washtenaw County Sheriff's Road Patrol arrived in time to see the lights. Eventually there were twenty deputies searching for the object and the majority of them saw the lights.

Dexter Police Chief Robert Taylor and Policeman N.G. Lee, were among those who responded to the call. Taylor said, "We saw it from the hill; it looked like it was down in the swamp. We saw the red glow in the swamp and with the binoculars, we could see it. It was a pulsating red light. We couldn't see anything but lights. When we got into the swamp there wasn't anything there. When our flashlights came toward it, it disappeared. We heard a noise." (*Detroit News*, March 21)

Lee added, saying, "…I thought it was an ambulance."

Taylor's son, also named Robert, said that he saw the "vehicle" in the sky. "It was going off in the east, pretty slow, then sped up and went west. It was flashing red and white." (Ibid.)

Taylor told Jerome Aumente, a reporter for the *Detroit News*, “There have been a couple of other reports last week. The midnight patrolman saw it. They saw three or four in formation around the center of town.” (Ibid)

Bushroe, who was one of those who had seen the lights days earlier, and who responded to the Mannor farm, said, “I didn’t see the one that landed, but at 11:15 p.m., we were heading back into Ann Arbor when I looked up to the south and saw three bluish green, brilliant red and white lights. It looked like an arc. It was round. We turned around and started following it through Dexter for five miles. It was headed west and we stopped.” (Ibid.)

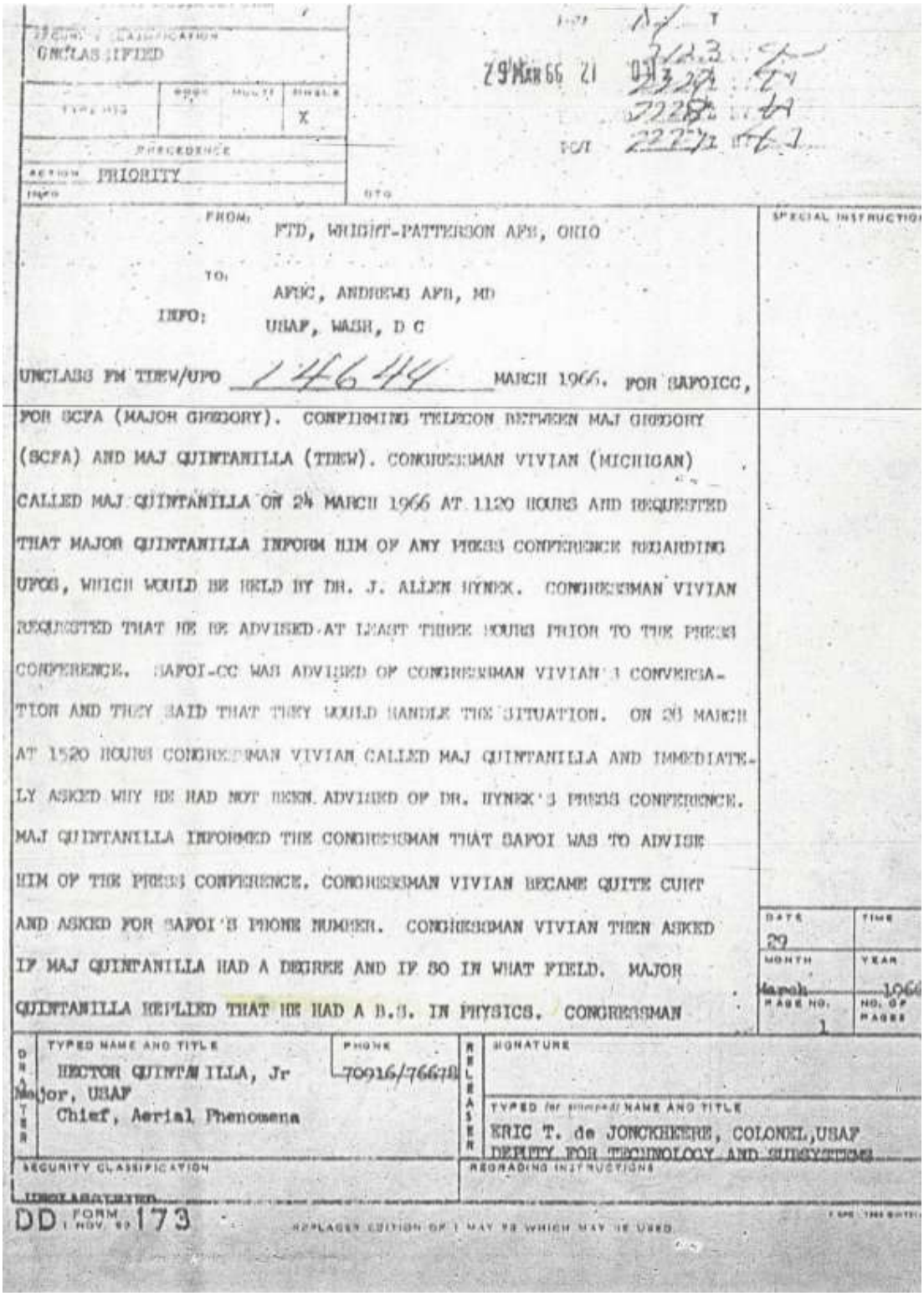
The report that Hynek wrote, which was based on the documentation available at the Sheriff’s Office, said:

> The undersigned officer [redacted but was Stanley McFadden], in company with the complainant [Mannor] proceeded along Dexter-Pinckney Road to Territorial Road, and then turned onto Quigley Road, where a vantage point was obtained, being in direct line with the house, and the area of the objects [sic] observation… At this point, the patrol vehicle was secured, and the afore mentioned proceeded into the woods, in an attempt to locate the swamp edge, and the object. While in the woods area, a brilliant light was observed from the far edge of the woods, and upon approaching, the light dimmed in brilliance. As the afore mentioned approached the upper ridge, and edge of the woods, the brilliant light again appeared, and then disappeared. A continued search of the area was conducted, through swamp, and high grass, with negative results.
>
> Upon returning to the patrol vehicle, the undersigned officers were met by others who had gathered to observe, and the undersigned officers were informed that one of the objects had been hovering directly over the area where our flashlight beams had [sic] been seen, and had then departed in a west direction of flight, at high rate of speed. Upon returning to the patrol vehicle, the undersigned officers returned to the [street address redacted], where [redacted] were talked to.

The report then continued with a discussion of the sighting, making it clear that it was Mannor who originally saw the lights in the swamp. The

information contained in the report matches that provided by Coral Lorenzen writing in *The A.P.R.O. Bulletin*.

There is also a more detailed description of the object. It had a brown coloring and what appeared to be a quilted surface. It was flat on the bottom and cone shaped toward the top. There were two small blue green lights on the outer edges of the object, and intensifying to a brilliant red. When the object was illuminated, the lighting was a yellow-white. The outer body seemed to have a rough texture.



UNCLASSIFIED

29 Mar 66 21

PRIORITY

FROM: FTD, WRIGHT-PATTERSON AFB, OHIO

TO: AFSC, ANDREWS AFB, MD

INFO: USAF, WASH, D C

UNCLAS FM TDEW/UPO 14644 MARCH 1966. FOR SAFOICC, FOR SCFA (MAJOR GREGORY). CONFIRMING TELECON BETWEEN MAJ GREGORY (SCFA) AND MAJ QUINTANILLA (TDEW). CONGRESSMAN VIVIAN (MICHIGAN) CALLED MAJ QUINTANILLA ON 24 MARCH 1966 AT 1120 HOURS AND REQUESTED THAT MAJOR QUINTANILLA INFORM HIM OF ANY PRESS CONFERENCE REGARDING UFOS, WHICH WOULD BE HELD BY DR. J. ALLEN HYNEK. CONGRESSMAN VIVIAN REQUESTED THAT HE BE ADVISED AT LEAST THREE HOURS PRIOR TO THE PRESS CONFERENCE. SAFOI-CC WAS ADVISED OF CONGRESSMAN VIVIAN'S CONVERSATION AND THEY SAID THAT THEY WOULD HANDLE THE SITUATION. ON 25 MARCH AT 1520 HOURS CONGRESSMAN VIVIAN CALLED MAJ QUINTANILLA AND IMMEDIATELY ASKED WHY HE HAD NOT BEEN ADVISED OF DR. HYNEK'S PRESS CONFERENCE. MAJ QUINTANILLA INFORMED THE CONGRESSMAN THAT SAFOI WAS TO ADVISE HIM OF THE PRESS CONFERENCE. CONGRESSMAN VIVIAN BECAME QUITE CURT AND ASKED FOR SAFOI'S PHONE NUMBER. CONGRESSMAN VIVIAN THEN ASKED IF MAJ QUINTANILLA HAD A DEGREE AND IF SO IN WHAT FIELD. MAJOR QUINTANILLA REPLIED THAT HE HAD A B.S. IN PHYSICS. CONGRESSMAN

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

DATE 29 TIME

MONTH March YEAR 1966

PAGE NO. 1 NO. OF PAGES

AUTHOR: TYPED NAME AND TITLE: HECTOR QUINTANILLA, Jr
Major, USAF
Chief, Aerial Phenomena

PHONE 70916/76678

RELEASER: SIGNATURE

TYPED (or printed) NAME AND TITLE: ERIC T. de JONCKHEERE, COLONEL, USAF
DEPUTY FOR TECHNOLOGY AND SUBSYSTEMS

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

REGRADING INSTRUCTIONS

DD FORM 1 NOV 65 173 REPLACES EDITION OF 1 MAY 58 WHICH MAY BE USED.

Page from the Blue Book files detailing Hynek's press conference about the sightings.

Dexter Patrolman Robert Huniwell said the object suddenly appeared about a thousand feet over his car sometime between 9:30 and 9:45

p.m. The object had red and white lights on it which, at times, seemed bluish. He said that he saw antenna on the sides. It hovered over the car, then made sweeps over the swamp where Mannor and his son had first seen it. Huniwell watched it for five to ten minutes before it was joined by three other objects. They flew in formation before they disappeared into the night sky. (*Ann Arbor News*, March 21)

Sheriff's Deputies Stanley McFadden and David Fitzpatrick, sitting in their patrol car, shined a searchlight on one of the objects. Suddenly, above them, a "strange lighted object appeared." They turned the light toward the object.

McFadden said, "From what we could see the object was as large as a small house, kind of pushed down flat. It had red-green lights on it and movements which could not possibly be made of any aircraft I've heard of."

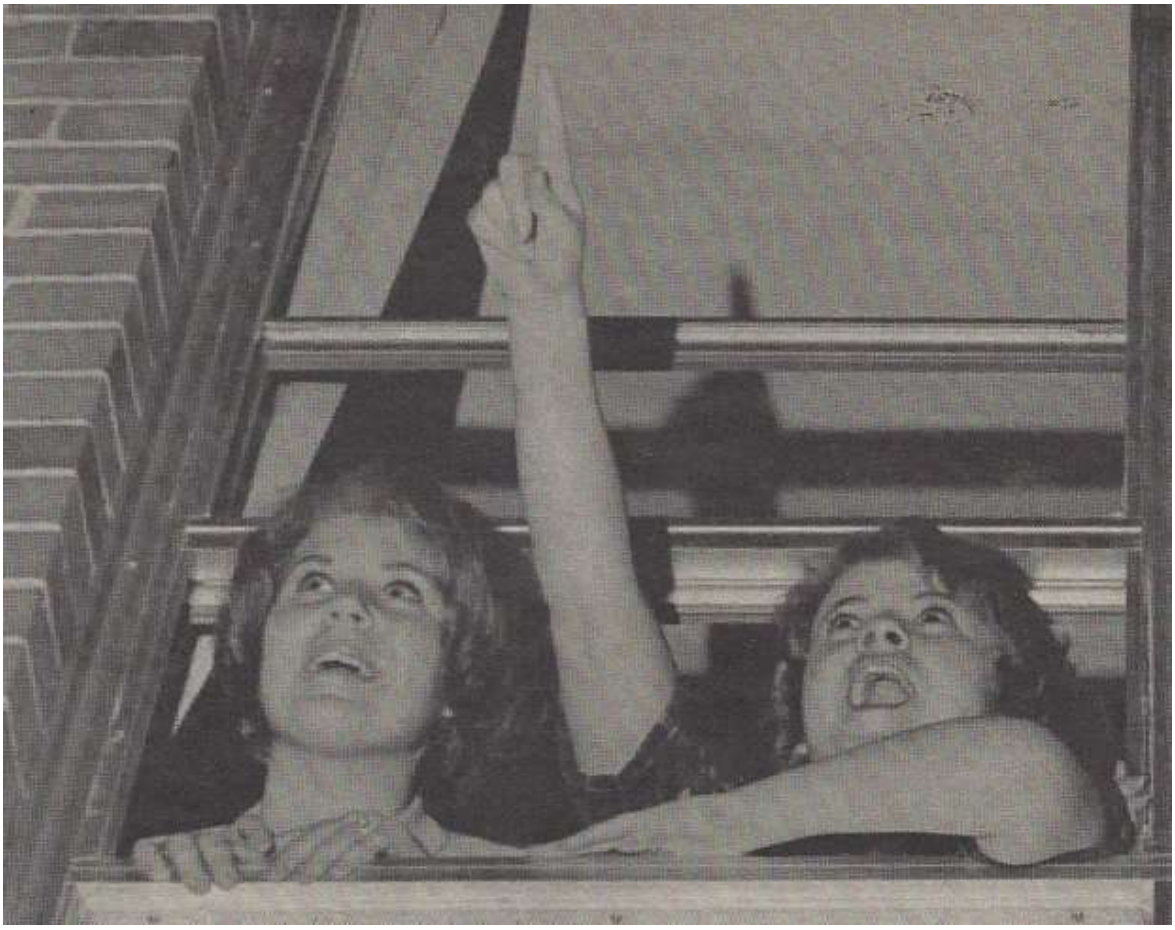
Other officers, involved, included Sheriff's Detective Charles J. Anderson and Harold Kerr, were returning to their headquarters, when they saw something strange. They chased the object until it disappeared.

They weren't the only ones to chase one of the objects. Chelsea village police patrolman Charles Sharp, said that he had seen one of the objects. He chased it but soon lost it.

The sheriff said, "If there actually is some type of flying object now making periodic visits, this theory of one coming down for a brief moment and the others hovering over the area for protection seems logical. Right now, we're not discounting anything. (Ibid.)

These new sightings generated a great deal of publicity. Hynek, who arrived a couple of days later, complained, "My interrogations were made triply difficult because of the ubiquitous press, radio and TV men. It was impossible to talk quietly with anyone without having a microphone placed in front of your face." (Blue Book).

The night after the sightings, the *Detroit News* reported, "Even the jeers of the unbelievers among hundreds of persons who spent the night sky-watching failed to bring a reappearance of the strange glowing objects various persona report have been flying around the Ann Arbor area."



College girls pointed at the area where they had seen the UFO.

It was the next night, March 22, that the objects returned to the Ann Arbor area, when students at Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, Michigan, spotted UFOs in the distance. Two girls, one identified as Jo Wilson in the Blue Book files, said that it was a “casual glance out the window” (Blue Book) which seemed to s how a house on fire. There was a fairly bright red light and two that were described as yellowish, close to the ground. They both knew that there was no house in that area.

They saw no object, just the lights. There were several other students who had seen a very bright light sweep past the window, before the “main” sighting. Hynek, who talked to many of the students, said that he “could get no consistent story relative to this, in contrast to the fairly consistent description to the lights in the swamp.” (Ibid.)

The Civil Defense Director, William Van Horn, who had responded to the reports said that his first impression of the lights was that they were marsh gas, that is, swamp gas, also known as fox lights. As he watched,

the red and white lights started to brighten and then begin to rise. The lights rose and fell four times between about 11:30 p.m. and 1:45 a.m. He thought he could see a mass that had a convex shape. He did produce a press release about his experiences and observations. He wrote:

> On the evening of March 21, 1966, at 10:32 p.m., a call was received from the New Women's [sic] Dormitory at Hillsdale College by the Office of Civil Defense. This call was from a College student reporting that some type of craft (which they believed at the time to be other than some type of conventional aircraft) had descended from the North East, flashed by their dormitory and disappeared to the south. The call was taken by my wife and close questioning Mrs. Van Horn decided that the girl was very sure of what she had seen. She informed the girl that if they should observe anything further they should call back. Mrs. Van Horn then relayed the information to myself [William Van Horn]. At this time the girl described as well as later, the observing of red, green and white pulsating lights.
>
> There were 17 of the college students that made this original observation.
>
> At approximately 11 p.m., a second call was made by the girls to the Civil Defense Office informing us that the object had reappeared and had settled close to the ground. I was informed that it was approximately one half mile from the dormitory.
>
> I at once called for help from the Police Department in attempting to locate the object, and three cars plus myself were sent in a two mile area from the dormitory to the east. I checked the area at the half mile and after I was unable to locate anything I at once returned to the dormitory.
>
> Upon arriving at the dormitory I was escorted to the second floor and taken to a room facing east, from where I made the following observation.
>
> I observed that there was an object which was an approximate distance of 1500 to 1700 feet away from us. The object was settled into a hollow and was apparently either near or on the ground. The two lights upon my first observation were what I would describe as a dim orange on the right and a dirty white on the left. (This was to our right and left.) After having observed this for a period of about 10 minutes began to grow in brilliance, the dim orange became red and

true in color and the white became a true white. As the lights became more brilliant the object or vehicle began to rise.

It would rise to a height of approximately 100 to 150 feet, stop momentarily and begin to descend. At occurred several times while we were observing it. At this time the beacon light from our local airport was flashing over the area and it appeared as if the vehicle was attempting to stay clear of this beacon or the beam of light from it. At one time upon ascending, a glow from the side opposite to us came from somewhere and I was able to see the side opposite to us came from somewhere and I was able to see a convexed [sic] surface. I theorized that evidentially a light was on the opposite side which made the glow. I estimated a distance of 25 feet between the two lights and upon ascending and descending the lights remained in a very smooth manner. The ascent and descent was at an estimated rate of 25 to 30 feet per minute. (This was estimated from my experience as a commercial pilot). At no time were any of the witnesses able to detect any type of sound or noise.

At approximately 4:30 a.m. those still observing the scene noticed the lights disappeared and this was the last that was seen of it.

The area that this was observed in was by no means a swamp but rather an area which is cultivated by Hillsdale College as a park.

[This was signed by William Van Horn.] (Press Release, “U.F.O. Observation” written by Van Horn.)

In Hillsdale, another observer, name redacted in the Blue Book file, but who Hynek believed to be the best observer based on the witness’ knowledge of physics, told Hynek about his own observations. He called Hynek and said that he was watching lights in the sky near the horizon. Through binoculars the lights were vertical lines, green on top, yellow in the middle and red on the bottom. Hynek said that this was reflected starlight. Hynek didn’t think much of the sighting.

In his Blue Book report, Hynek mentioned that a college student had photographed one of the strange craft. The student had alerted Van Horn, who told Hynek, who said the object in the photograph was a blimp. Hynek paid two dollars for a print, but the photograph never arrived. It is unclear what happened to that photograph.

During his investigations into the sightings, Hynek noted that he had talked to many law enforcement officers, but he didn’t bother in

recounting what they had told him. He mentioned Colonel Miller, described as the civilian defense chief in Ann Arbor, who said that he "took no stock in any of the reports that had been going around."

Camera lens flare that has been used as evidence of UFOs.

Hynek also wrote that he had made "discreet inquiries relative to character reference and general reliability of other witnesses, and came away with the general impression that I had not been dealing with seasoned and careful investigators."

In his report, Hynek wanted to look into common patterns in the Dexter and Hillsdale cases. He wrote:

> These had many interesting points in common; first, the lights in both cases were associated with swamp areas. While it is true that various individuals reported lights traveling in the sky at about those times and in those general vicinities, I could form no consistent picture whatever of these alleged events. On the other hand, I could form a consistent picture of what apparently was observed over the

swamp at Dexter and at Hillsdale. In both cases a distinctive reddish yellow, and green lights were reported, plus a general yellow glow. The spectacular lights, when reported, were stated to be in a limited area. One of the girls at Hillsdale agreed but stated that a yellowish glow surrounding and enveloped the discreet lights. The similarity between the Dexter light and the Hillsdale lights was striking. Not only as to color and intensity, but motion as well. The motion was described in both cases as smooth and slow, with a tendency to disappear rather suddenly and reappear elsewhere. Most observers described a smooth horizontal motion and while other girls from Hillsdale said the lights seemed to get excited and moved erratically when car lights and flashlights came into the vicinity, the major behavior [sic] was described as persistent, smooth and slow.

Here Hynek is making a case for the swamp gas theory that would be pushed at a press conference organized by the military at Selfridge AFB, held a few days later. It was here that the swamp gas explanation had been floated for the press for the first time. As so often happens, the press, offered any explanation for a series of UFO sightings, ran with it.

One of the things that Hynek mentioned in his report, after discussing the properties of swamp gas with others, was, “The lights have never been described as truly bright.”

Local Deputy's 'Saucer' Pictures

'Saucer' Pictures Intrigue Nation

Two of the pictures that were linked to the sightings, but were of mundane objects.

Yet his own report, in discussing the sighting by law enforcement officers, he wrote, “At this time, the object became illuminated from a brilliant source of light, which flowed horizontal between two small lights (Blue Book).”

While it seems reasonable to suggest that the Hillsdale students had been fooled by swamp gas, given their descriptions matched the colors

and characteristics of swamp gas, it is also a mistake to believe that this accounts for all the sightings. This is the trap that the Air Force investigators often fell into when discussing multiple sightings by multiple witnesses. If there was a solution that explained one sighting, it was applied to many others regardless of the facts.

Hynek added that some of the sightings might have been caused by other college students using flares to trick their classmates. It was reported that the remains of flares had been found near the college in the days that followed the sightings.

But Van Horn said, “There were no flares involved in this.” He said that Hynek knew that the flare incident took place on the day following the Hillsdale College sightings. Van Horn repeated that he and the coeds watched a white and red object that was twenty feet across. The sighting lasted for three hours.

The Hillsdale aspect of it took another turn decades later. *Michigan Today* carried an article “Ann Arbor vs. the flying saucers,” in 2014. They offered another explanation for some of the sightings. In a section called “Zeta Beta Alien?” there is more information about one of the alleged hoaxes. According to the article:

> Ascending the snow-covered slope at 3 a.m. officers found not an alien spacecraft but a large rock wrapped in tinfoil. Next to the rock were a desk lamp, an electric space heater, and a tape recorder, all powered by an extension cord that led to the kitchen of the nearby Zeta Beta Tau fraternity house…
>
> Fraternity brother Rob Klivans remembers that evening well. He and a few others in the house had been following the feverish media coverage of the UFO sightings and felt the time was ripe for a good old-fashioned college prank. Or, as he puts it: “We decided to test the limits of human gullibility.”
>
> Rick Pomp observed while his friends assembled the apparatus. “There was a space heater that had orange coils, and it was arranged up on the hill,” he recalls. “It would cycle off and on at a fairly rapid rate, so the coils would glow orange, then they were turn off and the orange would disappear. Then the heater would come on, and the orange coils would start to heat up again. Next to the heater was a large rock that was covered with tinfoil and that reflected the orange light.”

The crowning touch was the tape recorder. “There was a recording made of some sort of nonsense sounds, and the tape recorder was played through speakers,” says Pomp. “The whole thing was camouflaged, so what you had was this eerie sound and a glowing orange light that went on and off, off and on.”

“I don’t know how we got so many electronic devices connected to one extension cord, but I guess we did,” says Klivans.

Rick Feferman laughs as he remembers what happened next. “Somehow there must’ve been a neighbor or something who spotted it and freaked out and called the police,” he says. “Which is of course exactly what we wanted, although we would have been happier with the Air Force flying cover overhead. But they never came.”

Stuart Schmitz and other in the house could hardly believe the scene unfolding before their eyes. “The police came storming up the hill,” says Schmitz. “I sort of remember that they had their hands on their guns. I don’t remember if the actually had their guns out.”

Schmitz recalls that Dr. Hynek was leading the group. When the astronomer discovered the extension cord and saw that it led to the house, they could almost hear him shout, “Eureka!”

“Everybody who was looking out the window got a laugh out of that,” says Schmitz.

The police decided to take the fraternity president in for questioning, despite the fact that he knew nothing about the prank. Schmitz remembers watching as the president was put in the backseat of the police car. “We all waved to him as he left the parking lot (Michigan Today.”

The problem here is that there is no mention of this incident in the newspaper reports or in Hynek’s rather comprehensive discussion of his own investigation. Nothing to suggest that he found the space heater with its orange coils or the extension code leading to the fraternity house. Had such an incident occurred, Hynek would have mentioned it at some point, as he did the idea that there were pranksters with flares, but wrote nothing about this rather complicated and somewhat sloppy hoax.

There were a number of sightings that were explained by natural phenomena. On March 21, a Nankin housewife who was not identified beyond her job description said that she saw a bright light “like a star,

shortly after about 7 p.m." There is, of course, no reason that this was anything other than a star.

Loan Blacklern said that she saw something "white with a reddish glow" that brightened and dimmed as it spun. This description is so vague that it is next to useless.

In the end, after all the work that had been done, after Hynek had talked to many of the witnesses, but not all of them, the Air Force determined the sightings were the result of swamp gas. Didn't seem to matter that the temperature was too cold for swamp gas to be released, or that witnesses described a ship with multiple lights. After the interviews with law enforcement officers talked of chasing the lights for miles while the object stayed out in front of them.

True, the original sighting from around Milan, Michigan, involving law enforcement officers is listed as "Insufficient Data,"; it is in a separate folder and not part of the Dexter/Hillsdale sightings. Those, according to the Air Force and Project Blue Book are swamp gas.

Hynek, however, during the press conference, and in the report that he had written after his investigation, claimed that the lights had never been described as truly bright, though this is inaccurate. He continued:

> It appears to me that many of the conditions for the appearance of swamp light were satisfied at both Dexter and Hillsdale, I can't state with any certainty that this is the correct solution to the problem, merely that is the most likely cause. I would of course, appreciate learning of other possible natural causes should they be forthcoming. We can, I believe, completely eliminate any solution based on aircraft, balloons, birds, meteors, stars, etc. because they simply do not fit the consistent data reported to me.
>
> In putting forth the swamp gas explanation of the major Michigan sightings I am aware that it is open to several objects [sic]: we do not know whether swamp lights ever appear at the near freezing temperatures that obtained in those areas at the time. If these were swamp lights, one may well ask why they have not been seen in those localities before. One may ask why not at other swamp areas in Michigan instead of just these two? I am also concerned that the Michigan sightings bear a slight resemblance to other UFO sightings in which swamp areas do not figure. I am also concerned that I had to neglect the peripheral evidence of the few people who said that they thought an object had been present. On the other hand, no

convincing evidence or coherent evidence was presented that any object had been seen either to enter or to leave the area. And why swamp areas in both cases? The case for swamp gas is by no means conclusive, and is unprovable, but still remains in my mind as a logical explanation for the majority opinion as to what was sighted. I therefore presented this likely at the requested press conference, at which I pointed out in no uncertain terms that the swamp gas hypothesis was just that and that "I couldn't prove it in a court of law."

What all this means is that Hynek did not interview all the witnesses, he was not convinced that swamp gas was a solid explanation, and that at best, the case should have been labeled as "Insufficient Data," meaning that not all the data were collected, and the scientific evidence suggested that swamp gas wouldn't form at the near freezing temperatures. At worse, for the Air Force, it should have been called "Unidentified."

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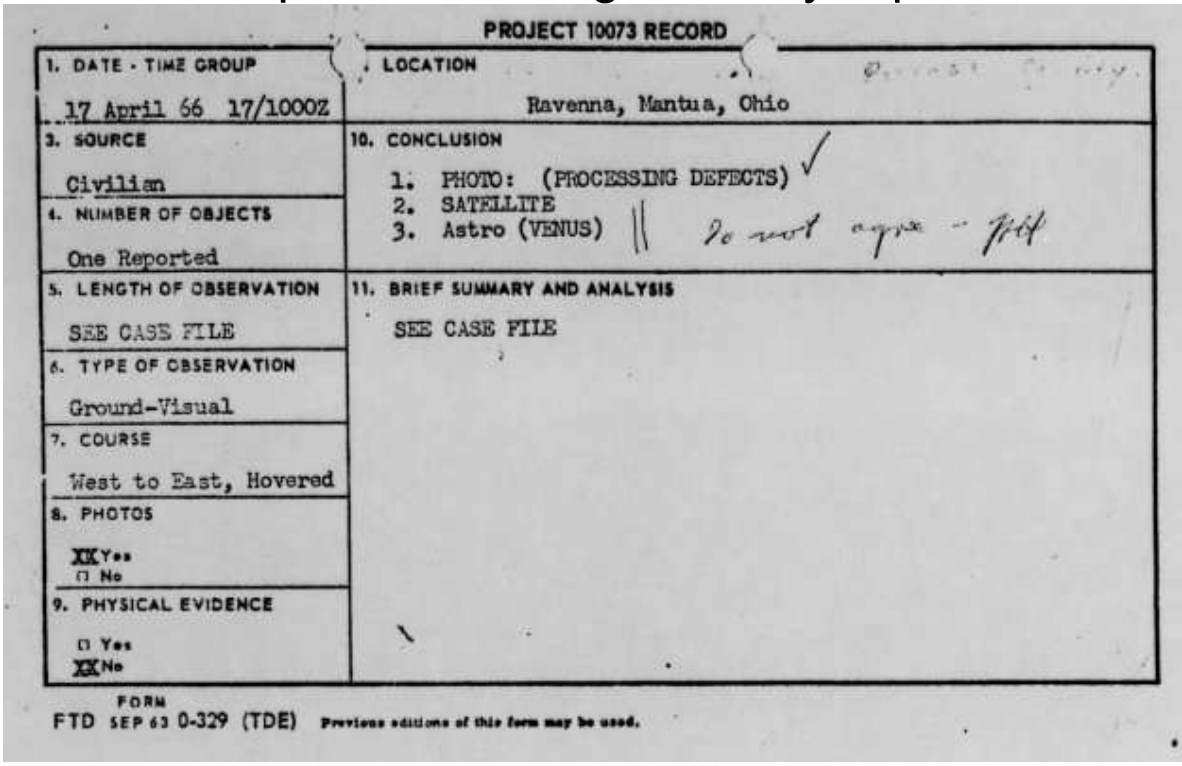
Project Blue Book file, Roll No. 60, Case no. 10264.

"The Michigan Cases." *The A.P.R.O. Bulletin*. (March/April 1965).

Chapter 15: Portage County: April 17, 1966



PROJECT 10073 RECORD

1. DATE - TIME GROUP 17 April 66 17/1000Z	2. LOCATION Ravenna, Mantua, Ohio
3. SOURCE Civilian	10. CONCLUSION 1. PHOTO: (PROCESSING DEFECTS) ✓ 2. SATELLITE 3. Astro (VENUS) || Do not agree - JAH
4. NUMBER OF OBJECTS One Reported	
5. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION SEE CASE FILE	11. BRIEF SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS SEE CASE FILE
6. TYPE OF OBSERVATION Ground-Visual	
7. COURSE West to East, Hovered	
8. PHOTOS XX Yes ☐ No	
9. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE ☐ Yes XX No	

FORM
FTD SEP 63 0-329 (TDE) Previous editions of this form may be used.

Project Blue Book Project Card

At the beginning of the film, *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, a number of police officers, in their cruisers, chase lights across Ohio. It is a funny variation on the cops and robbers movies that always require a car chase. And what is more interesting is that it is based on fact. The chase happened in the early morning hours of Sunday, April 17, in eastern Ohio and into western Pennsylvania.

The Air Force would investigate and, of course, find a mundane explanation for all the sightings. They would claim that the photographs submitted of the objects were nothing more than processing flaws on the negatives. They would attribute part of the initial sighting to an artificial satellite. And, they would attribute the rest to that old standby, Venus. On the Project Record Card, there is a handwritten note initialed by J. Allen Hynek. He wrote simply, "Do not agree (Blue Book)."

Remember, that the Air Force investigation consisted of a couple of telephone calls to talk to the deputies involved, Dale Spaur and Wilbur Neff. No one from Wright-Patterson Air Force Base bothered to visit the

area until forced to do so by congressional interest. And, remember that this all took place in Ohio. Wright-Patterson AFB is at one end of the state and Portage County at the other, almost as far away as possible and still remain in Ohio. But it is in Ohio, and at the time of the sightings the Air Force, by regulation, was required to investigate UFO sightings, especially those of a multiple witness nature when the witnesses were in law enforcement (Clark, 2019).

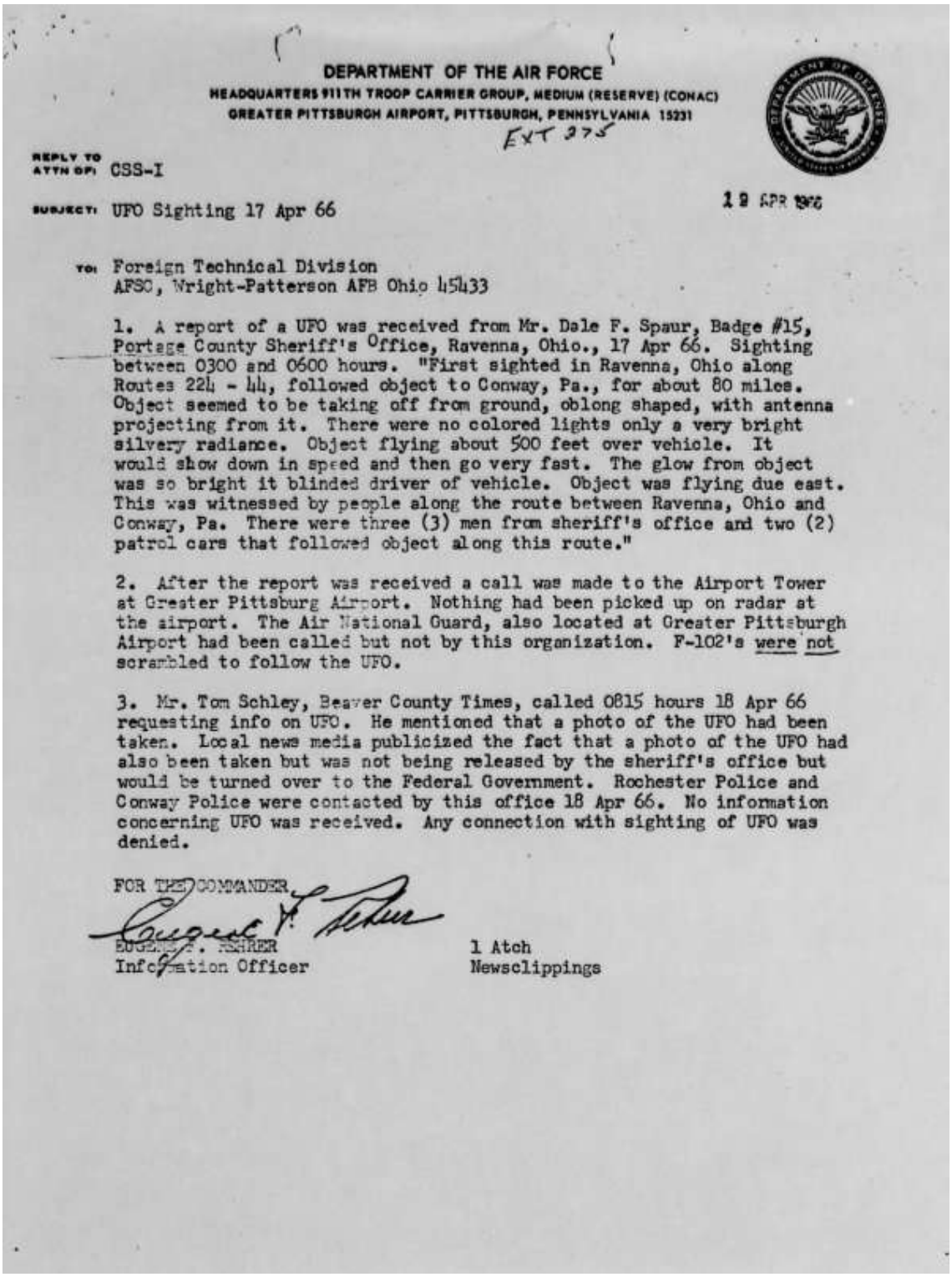
Portage County Deputy Sheriff Dale F. Spaur was teamed with Wilbur "Barney" Neff, an auxiliary deputy, on the early morning of April 17. They were at the scene of an accident just east of Cleveland where a driver had slammed into a utility pole. They were there at 4:45 a.m., talking to the utility company repairman, and listing as radio traffic between Portage and Summit counties described some strange events. A woman in Akron had called to say that a bright object "as big as a house" had flown over the neighborhood at an amazingly low altitude. No one in any of the police or sheriff's departments took the call seriously, including Spaur and Neff. This is a reaction that had been repeated for years as we have seen in the various cases investigated here. Law enforcement didn't take reports of UFOs seriously, believing that those reporting UFOs had been drinking… or were not too intelligent or were simply delusional (Clark, 2019).

Not long after having left the accident scene, about three miles from Randolph, Ohio, they passed an old truck on the side of the road. They pulled in behind it and walked toward it. From behind them, Spaur heard a strange electrical humming. He glanced over his right shoulder and saw a moving light visible through the trees at the top of a small hill. He pointed it out to Neff, thinking, "That must be the UFO that's been talked about."

The object continued moving toward them, coming from the west, climbed, turned to the right, and flew over the road. It stopped, hovering only fifty to a hundred feet in the air. The object was oval or saucer shaped and gave off a brilliant blue-white light that caused Spaur's eyes to water. He told Air Force investigators, "The only shape was the roundness of it, unperfect circle, egg shaped, almost oblong, but not real oblong." Whenever it moved, it tipped toward the direction it was going. Spaur also told the Air Force investigator, "[It] didn't have a red light. No wind. When it came over us it lighted the whole area. The ground was lighted by this object. Like looking at arc welder, blue-white light. The

only sound heard was humming sound like a power transformer, no thrust like a jet. No sudden surge of power (Blue Book)." At the Ravenna police station, Sergeant Henry Shoefeld, thought that they might have spotted some sort of government weather balloon.

One of the radio dispatchers had suggested that Spaur or Neff shoot down the object.



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 911TH TROOP CARRIER GROUP, MEDIUM (RESERVE) (CONAC)
GREATER PITTSBURGH AIRPORT, PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA 15231
EXT 375

REPLY TO ATTN OF: CSS-I

SUBJECT: UFO Sighting 17 Apr 66

19 APR 1966

TO: Foreign Technical Division
AFSC, Wright-Patterson AFB Ohio 45433

1. A report of a UFO was received from Mr. Dale F. Spaur, Badge #15, Portage County Sheriff's Office, Ravenna, Ohio., 17 Apr 66. Sighting between 0300 and 0600 hours. "First sighted in Ravenna, Ohio along Routes 224 - 44, followed object to Conway, Pa., for about 80 miles. Object seemed to be taking off from ground, oblong shaped, with antenna projecting from it. There were no colored lights only a very bright silvery radiance. Object flying about 500 feet over vehicle. It would show down in speed and then go very fast. The glow from object was so bright it blinded driver of vehicle. Object was flying due east. This was witnessed by people along the route between Ravenna, Ohio and Conway, Pa. There were three (3) men from sheriff's office and two (2) patrol cars that followed object along this route."

2. After the report was received a call was made to the Airport Tower at Greater Pittsburg Airport. Nothing had been picked up on radar at the airport. The Air National Guard, also located at Greater Pittsburgh Airport had been called but not by this organization. F-102's were not scrambled to follow the UFO.

3. Mr. Tom Schley, Beaver County Times, called 0815 hours 18 Apr 66 requesting info on UFO. He mentioned that a photo of the UFO had been taken. Local news media publicized the fact that a photo of the UFO had also been taken but was not being released by the sheriff's office but would be turned over to the Federal Government. Rochester Police and Conway Police were contacted by this office 18 Apr 66. No information concerning UFO was received. Any connection with sighting of UFO was denied.

FOR THE COMMANDER

EUGENE F. FISHER
Information Officer

1 Atch
Newsclippings

Spaur's first report to the Air Force.

Shoefeld orders them not to fire at the object. He wanted them to wait there until someone with a camera arrived though it seems that the deputies had a camera in their patrol car (Clark, 2019).

Without saying a word to one another, both deputies broke for the car. Spaur, according to the Air Force file said, "We ran back and had a camera. Kept under surveillance till it could be possibly photographed. Those were our instructions after we had called in."

Spaur cautiously drove toward the object. He had a better view of it and thought the craft was about twenty feet thick and about thirty-five to forty-five feet in diameter. The UFO began to drift away from them, climbing to five hundred feet and accelerating. Soon the chase was reaching speeds over eighty miles an hour. Spaur, apparently using his speedometer as a guide told the Air Force officers, "Object was first going eighty to eight-three miles an hour."

At no point in his description of the event did Spaur suggest a light in the night sky at some distance. He was not describing a tiny source, but a large one that was lighting the ground as it flew over. These facts tend to rule out Venus or any other astronomical explanation. It also rules out a satellite.

Spaur and Neff chased the object, using the roads available to them. At one point, it crossed the road in front of the patrol car, the light so bright that Spaur told his fellow deputies that he no longer needed his headlights. The UFO flew over a construction site near Atwater Center, and illuminated the heavy equipment parked there.

At the Berlin Reservoir, in Mahoning County, the object climbed to an estimated thousand feet and crossed the highway once again. Spaur was still on Highway 224, chasing the object at speeds now approaching a hundred miles an hour. Still the object maintained the same distance between the police car and itself which is suggestive of something much higher and farther away.

The chase continued, heading toward Pennsylvania. The UFO, now on the left side of the road, was beginning to pull away. It swung around, to the south, and flew over the road once again.

With the sun rising, Spaur got a better look at the object's structure. He said it had a dome-like top surface, an antenna or "fin-like" device that was about eighteen feet long and about a foot wide at the base, jutting up from the rear-center. He was describing what he'd seen on the craft that was clearly more substantial than a point of light seen in the distance which, in and of itself, ruled out Venus or any star.

Patrolman H. Wayne Huston, listening to the radio traffic, realized that the chase was coming toward him. Using the radio, he conferred with

Spaur, and said that he would join him when he got close to East Palestine, Ohio. In a statement made eight days later, he said, "I saw the thing when Dale was about five miles away from me... It was running down Route 14, about eight to nine hundred feet up when it came by. That was the lowest I ever saw it."

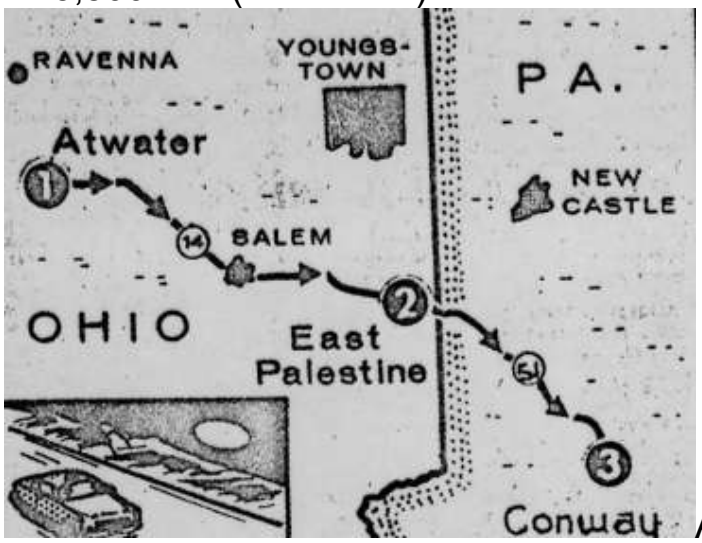
Huston told investigators, "As it flew by, I was standing by my cruiser. I watched it go right overhead. It was shaped something like an ice cream cone, with a sort of partly melted down top. I don't know whether the bottom was solid or not. It might have been like a searchlight beam, coming to a point, but it was so bright I would say it was brighter than the sun when it came up..."

He continued, "Spaur and Neff came down the road right after it. I fell in behind them. We were going eighty to eighty-five miles an hour, a couple of times to around a hundred and five miles an hour. At one point at least, I was almost on Spaur's bumper, and we checked with each other what we saw. It was right straight ahead of us, a half to three-fourths of a mile ahead."

He finished his statement. "I am familiar enough with Rochester [Pennsylvania] and I guided him [Spaur] because I couldn't pass him in Bridgewater to lead him. At Brady's Run Park, a car started to come out, hit the traffic light treadle, and some trucks were there. We had to slow down and lost sight of it. We came on down Route 51. Just after we came out of the railroad underpass in Bridgewater, coming out of Fallston, we spotted it again, and then in front of them again we turned to Rochester."

Another police officer, Frank Panzanella, who had just finished his morning coffee, was driving up a hill. To his right, he saw a shiny object that he though was a reflection from an aircraft. He told Air Force investigators, "I got to Mickey's Lounge on the top of the hill and I looked back and it wasn't moving so I turned the police car around and came back down Eleventh Street and went to Adamoski Service Station on Tenth Street and Route Sixty-five. I then got out of the police car and looked at the object again. I rubbed my eyes three or four times but didn't say anything to anyone for the time being. I saw two other patrol cars pull up and the officers got out and asked me if I saw it. I relied, 'SAW WHAT!' They pointed to the object and I told them I had been watching it for the last ten minutes. The object was the shape of a half of football, was very bright and about twenty-five to thirty-five feet in diameter. The

object then moved out towards Harmony Township approximately [at] one thousand feet high, then it stopped, then went straight up real fast to about 3,500 feet (Blue Book)."



At this point, there were four police officers in three separate patrol cars directly involved in the chase. Each described the object in a similar fashion

Map of the route of the UFO chase.

and if the estimates of the size don't match exactly, it’s not that important. What is important is that the police officers could see the moon with Venus to its right. The UFO was to the left. And, once again, they were not describing a point of light, but a solid object.

At about 5:00 a.m. the chief of the Mantua, Ohio, police force, Gerald Buchert, heard about the sightings over the police radio. The Sheriff’s Office had ordered the deputies to be on the lookout for the lights reported earlier. Buchert drove home to get his camera and to wake his wife, Joan. He dragged her out of the house, talking about the sighting, but she was confused by all that he said. Rather than tell her exactly what was going on, he just insisted she come with him. She suddenly stopped her complaints as he pointed to an object that looked like two saucers joined together at the rims hovering not all that far from where they stood. There was no sound from it, as it tipped, moving away toward the east.

With his wife, he watched it for fifteen or twenty minutes as it seemed to move erratically in the sky. Using a small camera with black and white film, he took a number of pictures of the object before it disappeared.

The next day, Buchert told *The Plain Dealer*, that the object “was round when I looked straight up at it, but when it moved to the left – I feel

like an idiot saying this – it looked like a saucer, like two table saucers put together (Ohio Deputies).”

After Buchert had the film developed, and apparently satisfied that it would prove he had seen something strange, he called the Cleveland office of the FBI. An agent there told that someone would be in touch. That someone was Major Hector Quintanilla, Jr., then the Chief of Blue Book. They discussed the photographs and Quintanilla told Buchert that he could release a grainy copy of the photograph to the media but to send him the negatives.

The trouble here is that Quintanilla had no authority to order Buchert to do anything. If he, Buchert, wanted to provide the media with all the pictures and provide a complete statement about his sighting, that was his right. However, Buchert agreed with Quintanilla. He did as asked.

After talking with Quintanilla, Buchert wrote, on April 22, “I was advised… that what I saw was PROBABLY only the planet [sic] Venus… I asked the Major if it was the planet Venus then how come it moved up and down and to the side. I at one time kept the wires from the telephone pole in view and the object DID go below and then above them. The wires were NOT moving. I was advised by the Major that this was due to atmospheric conditions most likely.”

Analysis of the photographs produced little of value at least according to Quintanilla, who wrote to Buchert on April 25, 1966. In the letter, he said, "The most probable cause of the object which you were trying to photograph was the planet Venus and this was the reason that you were unable to photograph it with your camera. In order to photograph Venus, you would have to photograph it with a time exposure. This cannot be done with the type of camera you were using. Thank you for your cooperation and your interest in this matter (Blue Book)."

Overlooking the condescending attitude shown in the letter, complete with a lecture on the proper way to photograph Venus with a small hand-held camera, it seems unreasonable to accept that analysis. Given the description of the object that he had his wife saw which was more definitive than a point of light in the distance, it is clear that they saw something other than Venus. (*Cleveland Scene*, accessed April 21, 2019).

There is another aspect of the case that is puzzling as well. There are police officers who suggest that the Air Force attempted to intercept the object. Panzanella called the Rochester Police and spoke to radio

operator John Beighey. He suggested Beighey alert the Greater Pittsburgh Airport about the sightings, apparently believing that the Reserve unit or National Guard unit there would be able to intercept the unknown. A short time after he made the suggestion, Panzanella saw what he thought was a vapor trail in the west. Someone came over the radio and said that the interception was in progress. At that point, the UFO shot high into the sky and disappeared.

Although Panzanella had decided to wait where he was while the Ohio police officers headed home, he was told by Beighey that someone at the Air Force office in Pittsburgh wanted to interview the witnesses. There was also some discussion about an overheard remark that someone at the airport had said the object was on the screen, meaning that it was being tracked by the airport's radar.

Panzanella, headed out, red light flashing, and caught up with the other officers, that is, Spaur, Neff and Huston. He told them that the Air Force wanted to interview them.

Another police officer, Henry Kwaitanowski, who had been listening to the discussion between Panzanella and Beighey, was standing near his patrol car when he spotted jets flying away from him. He thought they looked more like commercial aircraft than fighters, but behind them he saw a shiny, football-shaped object that he thought was about the same size and altitude as the jets.

There are other hints that an interception might have taken place. According to a statement made by police officer Lonny Johnson (who was teamed with Ray Esterly), "We went to Prospect Street partway down the hill, when we saw the object in the distance at an elevation of approximately 25 degrees, estimated altitude 10,000 - 20,000 feet... Actually, first we saw one jet, then the object in front of it. We could see the jet, the exhaust space, and the contrail. The jet seemed at the same altitude of the object, going southeast. The jet seemed to be pursuing the object. While we watched, for an estimated time of no more than two minutes, we saw two more jets coming from behind, in the same direction. These two had arcing contrails, either down or curved horizontally. The object was ([according to] Esterly) less than three or even ([according to] Johnson) 1 mile(s) away, in front of the first jet. The other two were about ten miles back."

The statement continued, "The object was a bright ball, about five times the size of the jet behind it. Its color was reddish orange, perhaps

from sky reflection. Brighter than the planes. We could hear no noise from the object, nor from the jets. The object's brightness did not vary."

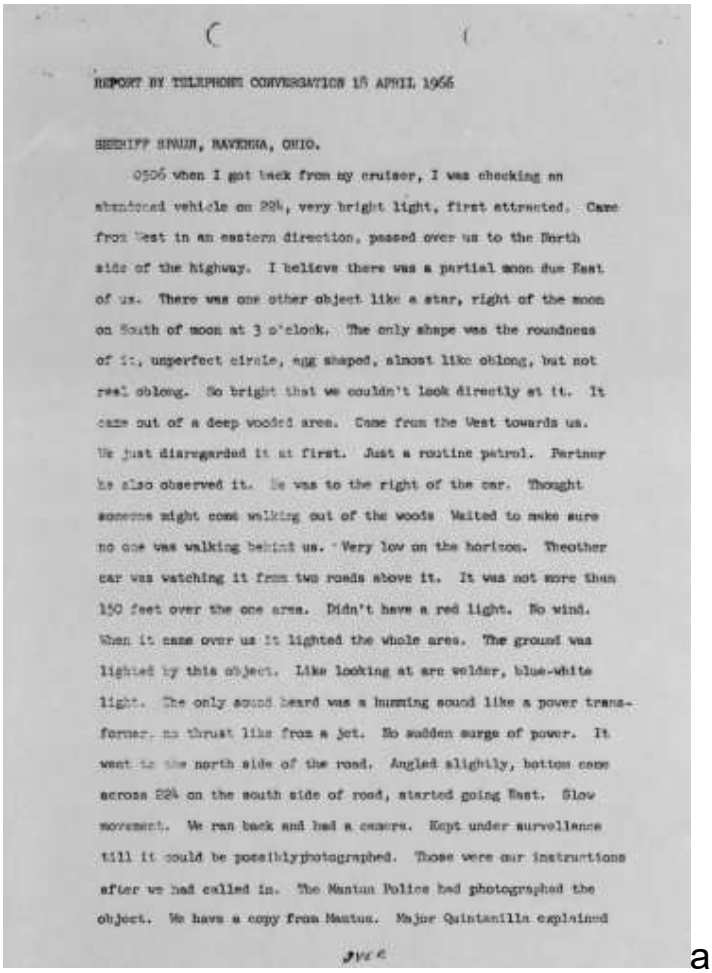
A few moments later, according to the statement, "We returned to the Salem Police station when the four objects flew out of view... The UFO appeared to be in level flight all the time while we watched it. When we came in, the pursuit vehicle reported its location as near (the object was above) Firestone Farms, east of Columbiana."

To add the strangeness of this end of the sightings, radio operator Jack Cramer and Police Lieutenant Richard Whinnery were startled to hear, over the police radio, an unfamiliar voice, say loud and clear, "I'm going down to take a look at it... I'm right above it... It's about forty-five feet across, and it's trailing something."

The Air Force would later deny that any intercept had been attempted, but the evidence suggesting otherwise continued to grow. While the original officers to see the craft, Spaur and Neff, said nothing about a jet intercept, Panzanella, suggested that he, and Johnson and Esterly, had seen two streaks that were reminiscent of jet fighters.

William B. Weitzel, a field investigator for NICAP, interviewed a number of the principals in the case. He found more evidence of an attempted intercept of the UFO. Columbiana County Sheriff's Deputy Dave Brothers told Weitzel, "But

The UFO sighting in Spaur's own words.



REPORT BY TELEPHONE CONVERSATION 15 APRIL 1966

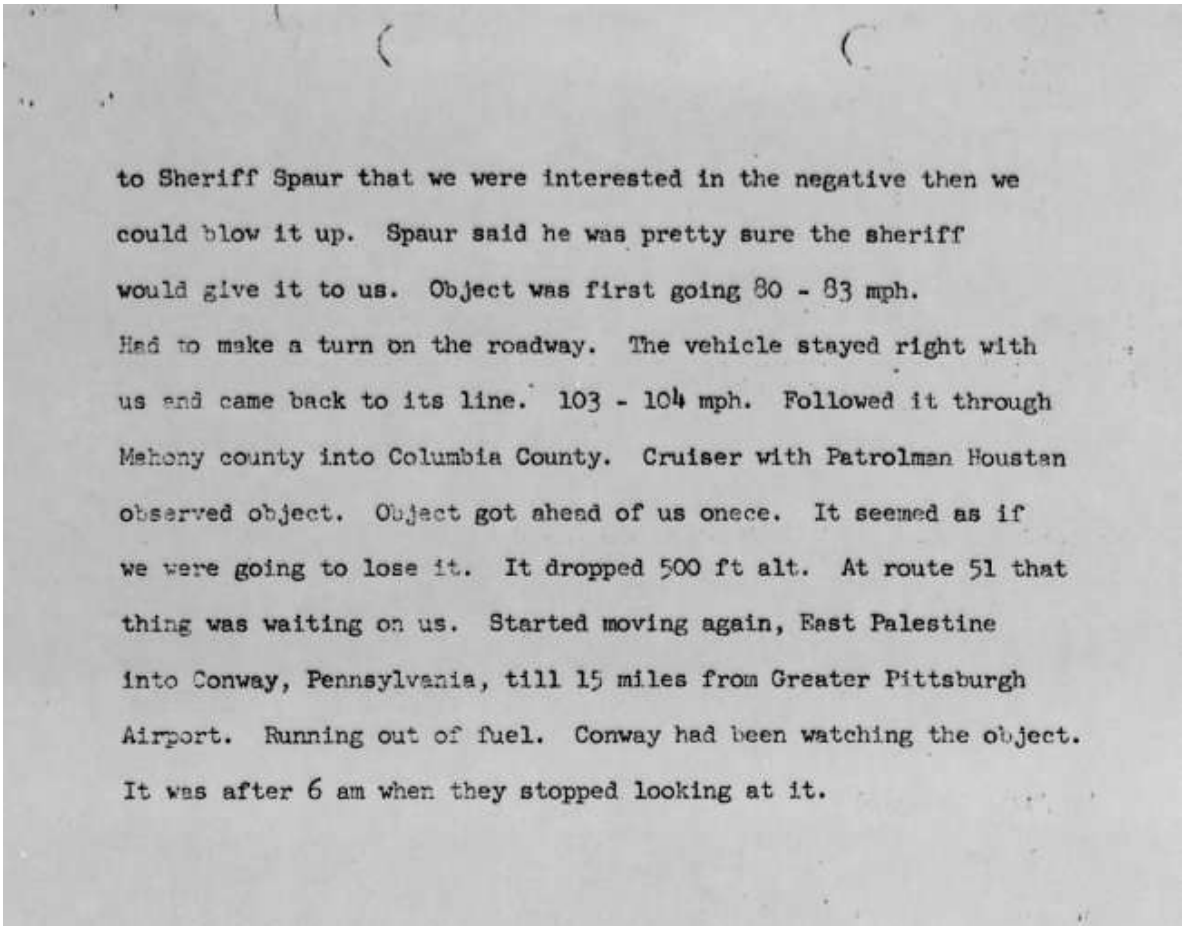
SHERIFF SPAUR, RAVENNA, OHIO.

0506 when I got back from my cruiser, I was checking an abandoned vehicle on 224, very bright light, first attracted. Came from West in an eastern direction, passed over us to the North side of the highway. I believe there was a partial moon due East of us. There was one other object like a star, right of the moon on South of moon at 3 o'clock. The only shape was the roundness of it, unperfect circle, egg shaped, almost like oblong, but not real oblong. So bright that we couldn't look directly at it. It came out of a deep wooded area. Came from the West towards us. We just disregarded it at first. Just a routine patrol. Partner he also observed it. He was to the right of the car. Thought someone might come walking out of the woods Waited to make sure no one was walking behind us. Very low on the horizon. Theother car was watching it from two roads above it. It was not more than 150 feet over the one area. Didn't have a red light. No wind. When it came over us it lighted the whole area. The ground was lighted by this object. Like looking at arc welder, blue-white light. The only sound heard was a humming sound like a power transformer, no thrust like from a jet. No sudden surge of power. It went to the north side of the road. Angled slightly, bottom came across 224 on the south side of road, started going East. Slow movement. We ran back and had a camera. Kept under surveillance till it could be possiblyphotographed. Those were our instructions after we had called in. The Mantua Police had photographed the object. We have a copy from Mantua. Major Quintanilla explained

about all I saw in the sky was, I did see three airplanes, which was denied in the newspaper, that there was no airplane. I saw three planes, and they were going in the same direction, east, into Pennsylvania. And the planes left a little vapor trail, but they weren't jets... they were running too slow for jets, because I was keeping up to them... I could make out the image of what they were, airplanes. And I only saw one jet, but that was farther east, and it looked like he was... coming west, and he just turned around and went back east, because you could see this vapor trail when he turned around and went east. But other than that, I never spotted the object they were chasing."

An Associated Press report suggested confirmation of the intercept attempts. "Reports... came from Air Force Reserve pilots based at Youngstown, [Ohio] who said they attempted to follow the object but that its speed - estimated at 100 miles an hour - was too slow for their jet trainers."

The Air Force, for its part, denied that any aircraft, jets or otherwise were sent after the UFO. In a letter from the Headquarters 911th Troop Carrier Group, Medium (Reserve)(CONAC), based at the Greater Pittsburgh Airport, Information Officer Eugene F. Rehrer, wrote, "After the report was received, a call was made to the Airport Tower at Greater Pittsburgh Airport. Nothing had been picked up on radar at the airport. The Air National Guard, also located at Greater Pittsburgh Airport had been called but not by this organization. F-102's [delta-winged fighters used by ADC at the time] were not scrambled to follow the UFO."



to Sheriff Spaur that we were interested in the negative then we could blow it up. Spaur said he was pretty sure the sheriff would give it to us. Object was first going 80 - 83 mph. Had to make a turn on the roadway. The vehicle stayed right with us and came back to its line. 103 - 104 mph. Followed it through Mahony county into Columbia County. Cruiser with Patrolman Houstan observed object. Object got ahead of us onece. It seemed as if we were going to lose it. It dropped 500 ft alt. At route 51 that thing was waiting on us. Started moving again, East Palestine into Conway, Pennsylvania, till 15 miles from Greater Pittsburgh Airport. Running out of fuel. Conway had been watching the object. It was after 6 am when they stopped looking at it.

Page 2 of Spaur's report.

Of course, it could be pointed out that these comments refer only to the Greater Pittsburgh Airport and to F-102s. It seems from the descriptions given, and the locations given, that neither Pittsburgh nor F-102s were involved. That does not rule out other aircraft at other locations.

However, Colonel Hendricks, of the Youngstown Reserve, was interviewed on April 18. He said, "We have been erroneously quoted by the AP, also have been falsely quoted. Have had no contact with the media. In the initial release of a plane being two (sic) fast or two (sic) slow, nothing. I have attempted this morning to find out who in the organization may have had contact. Could find no one. News media had called last night and were informed that they had no information. Spoke with the writer of the Cleveland Plain Dealer ([identified in the letter only as] Bloomfield) who claims the Air Force planes were too fast. He doesn't know where the info came from. They were querying (sic) the AP wires. Youngstown did not have any aircraft airborne. Major [Quintanilla) asked him if there were any other units close. Air Force information flight in Cleveland..."

The round of denials began. No one had any aircraft airborne and none of the radar facilities had anything unusual on their scopes. But there were deputy sheriffs who claimed to have seen some kind of aircraft attempting to close with the object. And the relatively new, at that time, stealth technology suggests that the lack of a radar return proves nothing. If stealth aircraft can fly over enemy anti-aircraft emplacements without being spotted, it stands to reason that an advanced technology might also be able to do that as well, and might even be harder to detect.

William Weitzel, the NICAP investigator, could not find any answers to the problem. He wrote, "I checked in person at Sheriff's Office Base Radio Stations in Portage, Columbiana, and Mahoning Counties, the Youngstown Police Department, Salem Police Department, and Chippewa Barracks, Pennsylvania State Police. Could not track down the source of rumors (and signed statements) about jet or radar reports. John Beighey, Rochester Police Radio Operator, denies hearing jet or radar reports such as Panzanella mentions, and is reluctant to discuss the event. Panzanella claims something may have come via phone-microphone, if Beighey had his button down; but there is still a conflict between Beighey's and Panzanella's testimony."

Weitzel thought it might be possible that the police radios had received, briefly, the aircraft radio transmissions, though they would have been on different frequencies. He thought this was highly unlikely. In the end, he had no explanation for the problem, but did accept the Air Force denials that they had any aircraft attempting intercepts. He thought it was possible that the witnesses had seen commercial jets in the area, that

the jets had nothing to do with attempted intercepts, and that their presence was a coincidence. It was not a very satisfactory explanation but it does cover the facts.

The three police officers who had been involved in the chase, that is Spaur, Neff, and Panzanella, drove to the police station in Rochester, and called the Air Force in Pittsburgh. Spaur later said, that some colonel had spoken to him briefly and then tried to persuade him that they had seen something conventional. Spaur was less than enthusiastic for that, and the colonel promised to forward the information on to Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. If the colonel had kept his promise, the response from the base, and from the officers of Project Blue Book was tepid to nearly nonexistent.

According to Spaur, he received a phone call on April 18 from a "Mister" Quintanilla, who said, "Tell me about this mirage you saw." Again, according to Spaur, he was asked if it had been in view for more than a few minutes. Spaur said they had chased it across several counties and into Pennsylvania, and had it in sight for over half an hour. At that point, Spaur said the man lost interest in the conversation. The colonel had interviewed him longer and asked more questions.

Quintanilla called Spaur a second time and again questioned him about the length of the sighting. When the deputy assured Quintanilla that he had watched the object for more than a few minutes, and had, in fact chased it, Quintanilla ended the conversation.

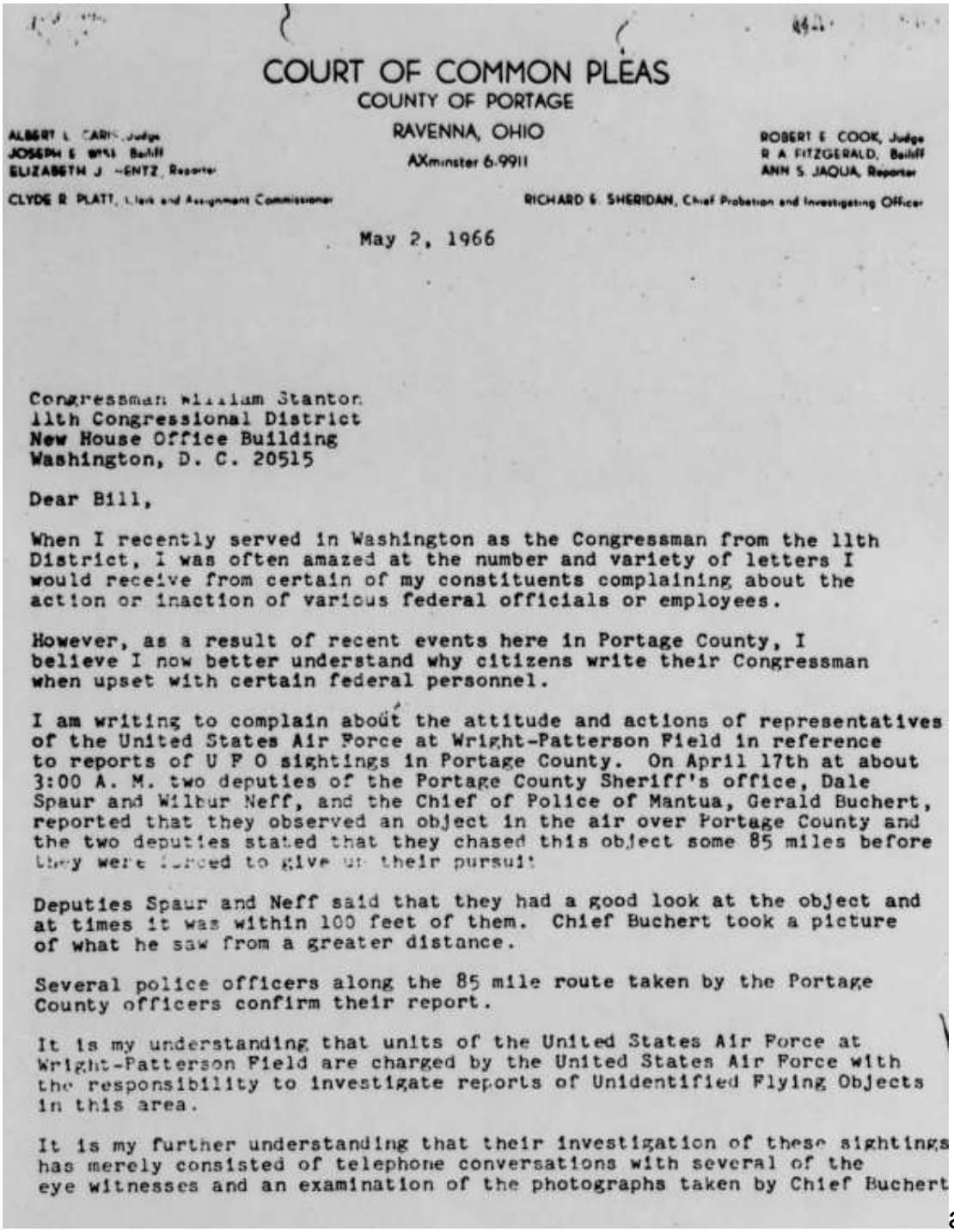
Less than a week later, in fact, on the following Friday, April 22, the Air Force announced the solution for the sighting. Quintanilla called the Portage County sheriff, Ross Dustman, and told him the case was resolved. His deputies had seen, first, an Echo communications satellite moving from northwest to southeast and when it was out of sight, Spaur had mistaken Venus for the same object. Spaur believed the object maneuvered in the sky because the highway changed directions giving the illusion of movement. When Quintanilla finished, according to Dustman, he (meaning Dustman) "laughed out loud." The solution was ridiculous.

Dustman told reporters for the UPI, "I go along with my men. It was not a satellite and not Venus. I've seen Venus many times, but I never saw Venus 50 feet above a road and moving from side to side like this... I have never seen Venus controlled like this seemed to be."

Spaur also had some words about the Air Force investigation and solution. "I don't know how much investigation [the Air Force] made, but evidently it wasn't a very lengthy one, or it didn't involve me... I'm definitely sure that I wasn't chasing Venus or observing Venus and running wildly over the countryside. I'm not quite that bad off."

The Air Force statement failed to mention that there were other witnesses including Spaur's partner that night, Neff. Some of those other witnesses described events that were remarkably similar to those of the police officers. About 5 a.m., two New Castle, Pennsylvania, couples, while driving just a few miles from the Ohio border saw an object across a field to the west. They described it was a "hamburg" or an "ice cream cone" and that it was brilliant, "sort of like looking into a spotlight." They stopped the car and rolled down the windows, proving to themselves that it was not a reflection on the glass. At one point, it flew across the road, and it always stayed about a quarter mile to a half mile in the air. Eventually it disappeared in the distance.

The whole Air Force explanation was so ridiculous, that almost no one accepted it. *Ravenna* [Ohio] *Record-Courier* reporter Carol Clapp told Weitzel that U.S. Congressman William Stanton wanted to know more about the sightings. Weitzel wrote a four-page letter outlining the problems with Blue Book's investigation



COURT OF COMMON PLEAS
COUNTY OF PORTAGE
RAVENNA, OHIO
AXminster 6-9911

ALBERT L. CARR, Judge
JOSEPH E. [illegible], Bailiff
ELIZABETH J. [illegible]ENTZ, Reporter

ROBERT E. COOK, Judge
R. A. FITZGERALD, Bailiff
ANN S. JAQUA, Reporter

CLYDE R. PLATT, Clerk and Assignment Commissioner

RICHARD E. SHERIDAN, Chief Probation and Investigating Officer

May 2, 1966

Congressman William Stanton
11th Congressional District
New House Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

Dear Bill,

When I recently served in Washington as the Congressman from the 11th District, I was often amazed at the number and variety of letters I would receive from certain of my constituents complaining about the action or inaction of various federal officials or employees.

However, as a result of recent events here in Portage County, I believe I now better understand why citizens write their Congressman when upset with certain federal personnel.

I am writing to complain about the attitude and actions of representatives of the United States Air Force at Wright-Patterson Field in reference to reports of U F O sightings in Portage County. On April 17th at about 3:00 A. M. two deputies of the Portage County Sheriff's office, Dale Spaur and Wilbur Neff, and the Chief of Police of Mantua, Gerald Buchert, reported that they observed an object in the air over Portage County and the two deputies stated that they chased this object some 85 miles before they were forced to give up their pursuit

Deputies Spaur and Neff said that they had a good look at the object and at times it was within 100 feet of them. Chief Buchert took a picture of what he saw from a greater distance.

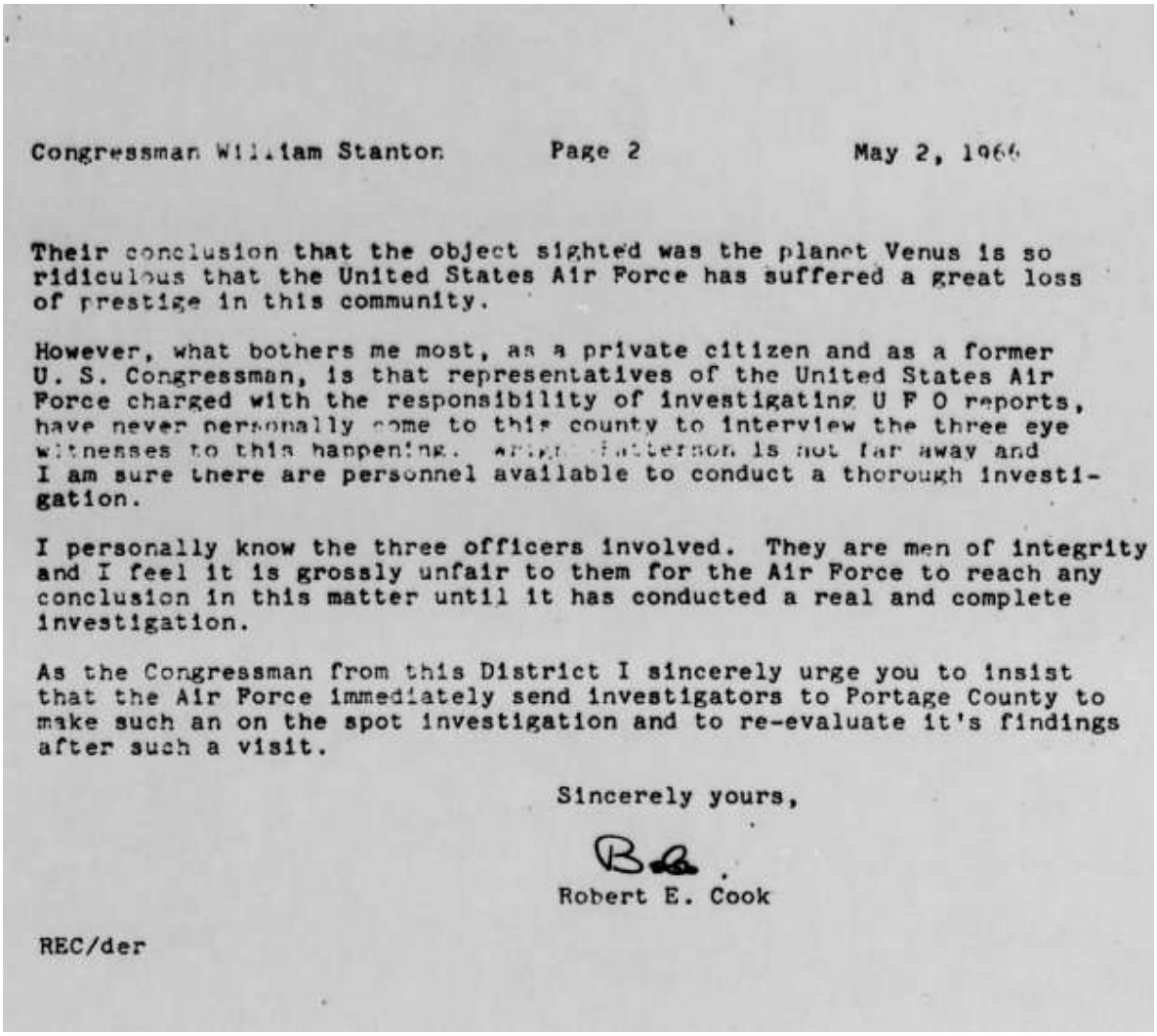
Several police officers along the 85 mile route taken by the Portage County officers confirm their report.

It is my understanding that units of the United States Air Force at Wright-Patterson Field are charged by the United States Air Force with the responsibility to investigate reports of Unidentified Flying Objects in this area.

It is my further understanding that their investigation of these sightings has merely consisted of telephone conversations with several of the eye witnesses and an examination of the photographs taken by Chief Buchert

and their tentative solution.

Understanding why people write to their Congressman.



Congressman William Stanton Page 2 May 2, 1966

Their conclusion that the object sighted was the planet Venus is so ridiculous that the United States Air Force has suffered a great loss of prestige in this community.

However, what bothers me most, as a private citizen and as a former U. S. Congressman, is that representatives of the United States Air Force charged with the responsibility of investigating U F O reports, have never personally come to this county to interview the three eye witnesses to this happening. Wright Patterson is not far away and I am sure there are personnel available to conduct a thorough investigation.

I personally know the three officers involved. They are men of integrity and I feel it is grossly unfair to them for the Air Force to reach any conclusion in this matter until it has conducted a real and complete investigation.

As the Congressman from this District I sincerely urge you to insist that the Air Force immediately send investigators to Portage County to make such an on the spot investigation and to re-evaluate it's findings after such a visit.

Sincerely yours,

Robert E. Cook

REC/der

Page 2 of the letter.

A few days later, Robert Cook, a Portage County Judge, wrote to Stanton, telling him that the law enforcement officers involved were men of integrity, and that he felt "it is grossly unfair to them for the Air Force to reach any conclusion in this matter until it has conducted a real and complete investigation."

Cook wrote that, "Deputies Spaur and Neff said that they had a good look at the object and at times it was within 100 feet of them. Chief Buchert took a picture of what he saw from a greater distance... It is my further understanding that their [the Air Force] investigation of these sightings has merely consisted of telephone conversations with several of the eye witnesses and an examination of the photographs taken by Chief Buchert... The conclusion that the object sighted was the planet

Venus is so ridiculous that the United States Air Force has suffered a great loss of prestige in this community."

Stanton, after receiving that communication, decided to take another step. He sent Weitzel's letter, as well as the results of his own investigation, to the Air Force commanding general. When he received no reply, he went to the Pentagon and spoke to Air Force Lieutenant Colonel John Spaulding, who conceded that Blue Book should have made an on-site investigation. He promised that such an investigation would be conducted shortly.

Is it necessary to point out, once again, that the Air Force had the mission of investigating UFO sightings? Air Force regulations demanded it and the overall Air Force mission required it. Yet no one inside the Air Force seemed to care enough to do anything except deny and to try to prove that no intercept had been attempted. The only reason they responded to those questions was because they seemed to believe, based on the tone of the responses, that they were being unjustly accused of lying about the intercepts. It might be said that now they knew how it felt when a witness was told that he was too dumb to identify Venus in the morning sky after chasing it in the wrong direction.

On May 10, about two weeks after the Air Force had tried to suggest satellites and Venus in combination, Major Quintanilla arrived in Ravenna to interview Spaur. Alerted by a message from Quintanilla, Spaur had called Weitzel and asked him to attend the meeting and to record it. Weitzel not only liked the idea, he tried to get both Panzanella and Huston to attend the meeting, but both had jobs that they couldn’t ignore.

When Quintanilla arrived, he was met by Spaur, Sheriff Dustman, two reporters Clapp and Tom Schley, Weitzel, and Dave Webb. Before the official interview began, Neff and Deputy Robert Wilson arrived. And then Quintanilla asked Weitzel and Webb to leave. Shortly after that the two reporters left, supposedly on their own. That left only Quintanilla and the police officers in the room with Weitzel's tape recorder which no one had bothered to turn off.

It seems, however, that this wasn't really an investigation by the Air Force, but an attempt to push an agenda of identification. Quintanilla tried to get Spaur to accept the Air Force explanation. He said, "I don't know whether you realize it or not, but there are at least thirty satellites that are visible to the naked eye. And these things have a northeasterly and a southeasterly component... And I checked thoroughly... And this is

why I made the determination specifically, because of the directions which you gave me. That you had first spotted the satellite coming over, and then focused on Venus. Venus at that night, that's a typical night, was at a magnitude of -3.9. Which is the brightest thing in the sky except for the moon."

Spaur responded, "Well, I don't know anything about it, but... I'm under the impression that... [you are saying] I have a misconception of..."

"No, you aren't Dale. It's not a misconception, Dale. It's - you're not the first to chase that..."

"No," said Spaur, "I know damn well I wasn't chasing a satellite, first of all - "

Quintanilla interrupted then, and said, "You weren't chasing a satellite. I didn't say you were chasing a satellite."

Spaur continued, "I think that if it was in the atmosphere as close as this thing was, as large as it was, it would probably have burned up at that speed. Second of all, I'm under the impression that our satellites doesn't (sic) stop and go and go up and down..."

Quintanilla interrupted again. "Well, they zig-zag. They don't zig-zag 'cause a satellite is in perfect motion. But it gives you the illusion of zig-zagging. It gives the illusion of movement. But it's not because the satellite itself is moving, it's because the eyeball does this. Your eyes, my eyes, his eyes..."

But the problem here is that Quintanilla is referring to autokinesis that occurs when someone stares at a point of light that isn't moving. Staring at bright stars, or Venus, at night, makes it seem that they are dancing around in the sky. But, if you look at the track of a satellite as it crosses the sky, the zig-zag movement suggested by Quintanilla isn't in evidence. That attempt at convincing Spaur of his mistake is as transparent as all the other explanations that had been offered.

Failing to convince Spaur of the satellite portion of the explanation, Quintanilla moved onto Venus. Spaur attempted to tell Quintanilla what he had seen that night. "Now, this, this thing, is this large - this big and this low... I follow it, and I have Barney with me. We're going down the road. So, you're gonna discount, well, there's two nuts. We're running Venus. Now Venus..."

Quintanilla interrupted again. "Now, now wait a minute..."

"Well, wait a minute," said Spaur. "Let me speak."

Quintanilla said, "You used the wrong word... I'm an officer in the United States Air Force..."

"Right. You definitely are."

"And I don't call anybody a nut."

But it didn't stop there. Spaur said, "No. Okay. I have hallucinations then. But this is what I've been saying..."

Quintanilla interrupted. "I didn't say you were having hallucinations..."

"What I'm trying to say is this. I'm going down the road. Now this thing that I am following."

But Quintanilla, who obviously has no interest in hearing the tale again said, "And treat me with the same respect that I treat you."

"I will, sir. I am. I'll treat you with more respect than I've been treated in the last..."

That sort of describes the whole of the interview. Neither side wanted to concede a point to the other. Eventually Weitzel and the reporters were allowed to enter the room, and the situation didn't improve. Weitzel and Quintanilla got into a nasty argument as Weitzel tried to suggest that the satellite and Venus explanation didn't fit the reported facts. Quintanilla was in the unenviable position of having to admit that he hadn't heard of some of the witnesses, which suggested that his investigation was incomplete. Annoyed, Quintanilla finally excused himself.

Weitzel later said, "Several people from the radio and newspapers tried to get statements from Major Quintanilla and me that afternoon. The major had nothing to say, and I declined extensive comment until I could hear the entire tape recording. I did suggest, and now believe, that Major Quintanilla had come to Portage County with his conclusions ready, and only listened politely, which on the whole he did, to testimony. At no time while he was interviewing the men did anyone see him taking notes... The deputies and Sheriff Dustman were fed up, and made no bones about their discouragement."

Weitzel's suggestion seems to be borne out by the lack of change in the Air Force conclusion. They had already issued their statement about the solution for the sighting, and even though Spaur had mentioned the craft close to the ground, even though they had talked of it lighting the road under it, and even though it wasn't a point of light, Quintanilla stuck to the conclusion it was Venus and a satellite.

The astronomer who had thought that Venus might provide part of the explanation, based on hearing second-hand reports, eventually gave up on the idea. William T. Powers, a systems engineer at the Dearborn Observation, Northwestern University, had originated the idea without talking to any of the witnesses. He eventually wrote to Spaur and Neff, "Apparently I found out considerably more about this event than the Air Force investigator did, because I cannot agree with the evaluation publicly released a few days after the sighting. What you reported to me could not possibly lead to such a conclusion: a satellite satisfies none of the characteristics of your reported object. As a matter of fact, Dr. Hynek agrees with this. He was not consulted before this news release was put forth."

As a parenthetical note, it could be that Hynek was not consulted after the "Swamp Gas" disaster in the Michigan sightings discussed earlier. The swamp gas explanation was not based on the observations of the witnesses, but it was the solution being pushed by the Air Force and then by Hynek in his role of scientific consultant.

Powers continued, writing, "I thought at first that during the latter part of your experience, after you had lost the object and then re-acquired it, that you and Mr. Houston (sic) might have spotted Venus, and thought it was the same object at a higher altitude: I spoke to Major Quintanilla on the telephone at the time I gave him the results of my telephone interview, and told him of this idea. Now I have additional information, chiefly from Mr. William Weitzel, which appears to make that hypothesis incorrect. I now understand that you and other witnesses did notice Venus and the Moon, and saw the object in motion relative to them, as well as being able to see a shape. At no time, however, did I suppose that the earlier part of the sighting involved anything other than an airborne object."

It made no difference to Blue Book investigators what additional investigation had discovered. They had a theory to explain the sighting. It made no difference to them that the witnesses were talking of seeing an object, not a point of light, that it had been within a hundred feet of them, and had illuminated the highway. The purpose of Project Blue Book by this time was to explain UFO sightings and that is exactly what they had done.

Although there were attempts by several people to persuade the officers at Blue Book to change their opinion, it never happened. Hynek,

in his role of scientific consultant even suggested the case be re-evaluated as an unidentified. James McDonald called the satellite and Venus explanation an "absurdity."

McDonald, in fact, wrote, "The fact Officer Huston saw the object coming in out of the northwest sky clearly rules out his seeing Venus, yet at that time the first two officers had been following the object for a much longer time than Echo requires to transit the full sky. This, plus the four-witness descriptions of vertical ascent at the termination of the sighting are calmly swept aside..."

The facts of the case were overlooked and ignored as the Air Force worked to hammer the explanation into the hole they had created. What is important is that the witnesses reported the size and shape of the object, seeing it close to the ground, and watching it as it lifted into the sky. It was in sight long enough for them to get a good look at it. Yet all of this is ignored as the Air Force reported the various witnesses had seen a satellite and Venus.

Throughout the Air Force files there are dozens of cases of Venus being reported as a UFO. These are easy to find. The witness will talk of a bright point of light that seems to fly erratically, never far from the horizon. If it was a morning sighting, then the object disappears, slowly fading from view as the sun comes up, this is clearly Venus. If it is an evening sighting, with the object eventually lost on the horizon, then this too, is Venus.

The point is, there are very distinctive descriptions that allow us to suggest Venus as the real culprit when appropriate. Yet, there isn't a case in which Venus is the answer and in which the witnesses provide a description of the object, suggest it close to the ground, and who also see Venus in the sky where it should be.

Once again, we have a case that has a label slapped on it, but we have no real answer for it. The police officers saw something very unusual early that morning. They chased that object until it lifted into the sky, disappearing. It was not Venus, a satellite, or any of the other mundane explanations that have been offered about it.

Skeptics have since attempted to suggest that the original sighting was of a meteor. That explains the object seeming to light up the ground underneath it. Forgetting that meteors are very short lived, though the glowing trail of ionize air will persist for several minutes, there were no reports of a meteor of sufficient size seen in the area. This is not to

mention that there would have been nothing for the deputies to chase from Ohio and into Pennsylvania.

The skeptics do suggest that a case reported from Vandalia, Ohio, in April 1966, might offer some insight. The project card said, “No object visible just a large light. No Noise. Object was visible for 2 – 3 minutes, and was moving fast, from W – NE. With location the object was observed and duration, & big bright light, appears to be an A/C coming in for a landing at Vandalia.”

There was a notation on the card that said, “Form 164 [Air Force UFO reporting form] requested over 30 days and not returned as of this date [which was not noted], if form received, sighting will be re-evaluated.”

The case was from a single witness, whose name has been redacted. It is labeled as insufficient data. There is nothing to suggest that this might have been a meteor and there is no astronomical record of a bright meteor falling in the Portage County area. To make it worse, there is no date assigned to the Vandalia sighting, meaning that it could have taken place at any time during April, and is therefore irrelevant to this case.

There is also another trouble with the investigation. According to Chief Buchert, Quintanilla who interviewed him in the days that followed, arrived with his mind made up. Quintanilla seemed to alternate between a weather balloon, a better answer than his Venus explanation, and his satellite suggestion. Sitting in Buchert’s house, Quintanilla learned that their priest, who was also there, had seen the object as well.

Later, in a meeting with Spaur, Neff, Sheriff Dustman and the dispatcher, Robert Wilson, Quintanilla pushed the same answers. Finally, Dustman had had enough. He said that too many people had seen UFOs. Dustman seemed to suggest that dozens of civilians in the Portage County area had seen the craft but had failed to report it to the Air Force.

That made no impression on Quintanilla. He told the assembled law enforcement officers that the Air Force believed the UFOs were “Misinterpretations of conventional objects and natural phenomena.”

Asked specifically about what Spaur and Neff had seen, Quintanilla said, “Place it under the category of satellite and atmospheric observations.”

Dustman’s response? He said, “Well, I’m sorry it’s turned out this way, because I know a lot of people have come to me and they saw the same

damn thing, and there's too many people involved for this thing to be a mirage, or somebody's imagination."

There is a post script to this report and that revolves around the lives of the men involved in the case. It has little to do with the Air Force investigation, though the answer offered by Quintanilla certainly made them look like they were not the brightest men to ever put on a police officer uniform. His oblique suggestion that they might not have been mentally stable had an effect on them and those around them.

Within six months of the sighting, Spaur had left law enforcement and was working as a painter. Spaur's marriage ended in divorce. One night he walked into the house, and for reasons that he said he did not understand, flew into a rage, grabbing his wife and shaking her. She filed charges and he spent a brief period in jail for it.

He ended up as a coal miner until, according the *Scene*, he fell 70 feet and broke his back. It put him into a coma that lasted several days. In his last known interview, he said, "I have become a freak… Look at me… 34 years old and what do I have. Nothing… To everyone I'm Dale Spaur, the nut who chased a flying saucer."

Neff's wife said that the chase had changed him as well. He had been in a state of shock when she first saw him after the chase. Later he refused to talk about it, saying that he would not tell a soul if one landed in his backyard. According to his wife, he had been through the ringer.

H. Wayne Huston resigned from the police force within months of the sighting. He moved to Seattle and became a bus driver. He told reporters that he had quit because of the sighting. He said that people laughed at him. He suggested that city officials didn't like police officers who saw flying saucers. Or maybe it was that city officials didn't care if police officers saw flying saucers, they just didn't want them to report those sightings to the Air Force or have their sightings reported in the newspaper. It made everyone look bad. Maybe it tended to reinforce the idea that those living in Ohio weren't as sophisticated as those living on either coast.

These weren't the first, nor the last, police officers who had either lost or quit their jobs after reporting flying saucers. The list is long and almost endless. And, in a few cases it seems to be the result of an effort to discredit the officer who made the report and therefore discredit his report. If the police officer is unreliable, then the report is worthless. And,

of course, if he can't be trusted to recognize the mundane, he is of no value as a police officer.

But the facts remain. The police officers, in communications with their superiors, chased something across parts of Ohio and Pennsylvania on April 17. Other officers, hearing those radio messages, went out and saw the same thing. If Blue Book was a search for the truth, and for information, they would have done more than make a few telephone calls, and one "investigative" trip. They would have attempted to find out what really happened.

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Chapter 16: The End of Blue Book

For more than a decade and a half, since January of 1953, there were those in the military and those in government service who wished the UFO problem would go away. They worked to rid the Air Force of the burden of UFO investigation and the financial drain it placed on military resources. Proof of this has surfaced with the declassification of Air Force and government documentation showing a lack of concern about UFOs and a real distain for anything to do with them.

The first of these overt attempts to change the public perception of flying saucers came after the wave of sightings in the summer of 1952. When Washington, D.C., was visited by UFOs on two consecutive Saturday nights, with saucers reported over the White House, the president took notice. Answers were required and the solution to this problem was the creation of the Robertson Panel, named after its leader, H. P. Roberson and sponsored by the Central Intelligence Agency.

Dr. Michael Swords

Dr. Michael Swords, using documents from a variety of now declassified sources including those housed at the J. Allen Hynek Center for UFO Studies, the declassified Project Blue Book files now available on line, and the files of the National Investigations Committee on Aerial Phenomena also housed at CUFOS, reconstructed the Panel's history. Swords told me during an interview, "The first guy he gets to do this [meaning serve on the committee] is Thornton Page because Page is handy. Page turns out

to be the junior member... but he doesn't know anything about UFOs. Robertson sent him an article to read..."

Swords then said, "I think Alverez [Dr. Luis Alverez] is the next guy... and Alverez comes in hostile... Robertson has to get two more people... I think Goudsmit [Dr. Samuel Goudsmit] is probably the last guy... and I'm not sure when they talk Lloyd Berkner into [it]. Goudsmit is just incredibly hostile [to the idea that UFOs are anything other than hallucination and hoax]."

From this it seems that the panel is not receptive to the idea of UFOs being alien craft, but then it isn't necessary for them to enter the investigation as believers, as long as they are willing to look at the evidence dispassionately. But that doesn't seem to the be case. They came into it with preconceived notions and they weren't going to be convinced of anything else no matter what evidence was presented.

Dr. H. P. Robertson

Dr. J. Allen Hynek, who was there, but as the Air Force consultant to Project Blue Book and not a member of the panel, would later tell Swords that the members of the panel entered the committee room with the idea UFOs were going to be debunked from the absolute beginning. According to what Hynek told Swords and Swords told me, Alverez and Goudsmit were saying "nothing but hostile things and Goudsmit is saying wiseass things... Page is more open minded and Berkner is not there."

Captain Edward Ruppelt, who was the chief of Project Blue Book from 1951 and into 1953, described the Panel. In his book, *The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects*, wrote, "When this high court was convened... one of three verdicts would be acceptable. 1. All UFO reports are explainable as known objects or natural phenomena;

Dr. Luis Alverez

therefore, the investigations should be permanently

discontinued. 2. The UFO reports do not contain enough data upon which to base a final conclusion. Project Blue Book should be continued in the hopes of obtaining better data. 3. The UFOs are interplanetary spacecraft."

But the sad fact here is that the panel was a *fait accompli* before the first meeting. According to the research carried out by Swords, not everyone was in on the plan. The Panel had been salted, not by skeptics, but by men who were outright hostile to the idea of alien visitation. They weren't interested in determining if some UFOs might be alien, or that there was something of scientific value that could be learned by studying the cases, they only wanted to permanently end the discussion about them in the public arena. To them the simple idea of alien visitation was so outrageous that it didn't deserve to be seriously considered. To them, there was nothing real about flying saucers. They were in the same category as the Easter Bunny and everyone should agree with their assessment because they were, after all, scientists who know these things. The impression was that they would have access to everything that related to UFOs and that included anything that might have been highly classified.

Dr. Thornton Page

Under the auspices of the CIA, the panel met for the first time on January 14, 1953. According to Ed Ruppelt, the first two days were made up of his review of the work done by and the findings of the various Air Force projects, that is, Sign, Grudge and finally Blue Book. Ruppelt reported that his team, and those who preceded him, had analyzed 1,593 reports and found explanations for all but 429 or just under a third. Confidence in those explanations ranged from known to possible, which meant they thought they knew what had caused a sighting but couldn't prove it.

Swords had learned a little more about the exact chronology of events in the meetings during his discussions with Hynek. During the first half day, no one was allowed into the meeting room except for a couple of CIA men that included Marshall Chadwell and Philip G. Strong. Hynek and Ruppelt cooled their heels outside waiting for their chance to enter and present their information.

Ruppelt made it clear during his presentation that most of the data they had

Dr. Samuel Goudsmit

gathered was

observational. That is, they had relied on the abilities of the witnesses to accurately estimate size, distant and speed. Ruppelt wrote, “We could say only that some of the UFO’s had been traveling pretty fast.”

Ruppelt pointed out that radar cases were available, but open to the interpretation of the operators and interpretation of the investigators, which also put radar sightings into the category of observational. They had to rely on the abilities of the radar technicians and operators for their interpretation of what was seen on the scope and no one had any idea of how reliable those observations might be. The investigators provided no way of answering that question.

Ruppelt also said there were no good physical evidence cases. Ruppelt added that most of the photographs they had seen were fakes, some crude, others more sophisticated. He suggested that photographs, no matter how good, would not prove the case for alien visitation. At that point, that is 1953, they had some very good photographs.

Dr. Lloyd Berkner

According to Ruppelt, the last day of Robertson panel meetings was reserved for a review of the two films taken about two years apart. Ruppelt believed these were the best evidence held by Blue Book. No one believed they had been faked, which meant that no one considered them to be hoaxes. One of them, taken in Montana in 1950, which was explored at length here, showed two brightly lighted objects crossing the sky, passing behind a tower and over a rooftop. It was a short segment.

The other was taken by a Navy warrant officer, Delbert Newhouse in July, 1952, near Tremonton, Utah. After sighting the objects, he stopped the car to get his 16 mm movie camera from the trunk. He took a short film of the bright objects milling around in a brilliant blue sky. He would later tell Ruppelt that the objects flew over the car and that they had a saucer shape to them, a detail not visible in the film. Newhouse told me

the same thing years later. The Robertson Panel decided that the objects were sea gulls gliding on the thermals. Navy investigators didn't agree, believing the objects were much larger than birds and were internally lighted rather than reflecting the sun.

Delbert Newhouse

Additional analysis by independent parties and by both believers and skeptics reached different conclusions. The Robertson Panel had made their determination, which would be the same that the Condon Committee would reach nearly two decades later. The Montana movie showed two jet fighters reflecting the sun, according to the Panel and Tremonton showed seagulls.

It was on that last afternoon, a Friday, with Hynek invited to stay inside the meeting room, that Robertson was given the task of writing the final report. Swords wrote about this, based on his review of the documents and his discussions with Hynek about it. Swords said, "I can't imagine that H. P. Robertson, a guy like him, is going to sit down and late into the evening and bang out a draft of the report on his own that somehow, mysteriously, the next morning is already read by Lloyd Berkner and has already been taken by Marshall Chadwell to the Air Force Directorate of Intelligence and been approved," Swords wrote. "So, when they show up on Saturday, Robertson presents this draft to the rest of the committee and the rest of the committee does minor revisions... There [are] some remarks that are out of line that they decided are not going to be included."

Dr. J. Allen Hynek

Swords noted that this seems a little unreal. According to him, “It seems an amazingly cut-and-dried deal that by the time Saturday shows up, here’s this mildly to be revised draft that has already been seen by one of the other committee members who wasn’t even there for the first two and a half days. It’s already been seen by Chadwell and the U.S. Air Force.”

Dewey Fournet, who had the chance to review the data, who had been present for some of the sessions, and now decades later had a forty-year perspective, said that the scientists had no choice in their conclusions. For him and for them, the evidence simply wasn’t persuasive. There was little more than the testimonies of the witnesses, none of whom had appeared in front of the committee so that their observations could be understood. Others, later, would simply refer to such testimony as “anecdotal gossip,” which much later would become the rallying cry of the debunking community.

But if the UFOs were nothing more than hoaxes, mirages, misidentifications, and limited sightings, meaning that the witnesses had not gotten a good look at objects, then national security wasn’t an issue at all. If the UFOs were all, basically, imaginary, regardless of the stimulation, then the Air Force was

Major Dewey Fournet

doing its job because there was nothing to intercept, there was nothing to challenge, and nothing to fear.

Concerned that a flood of UFO reports could mask an enemy attack, the Robertson Panel decided to address the issue. The report said, "...although evidence of any direct threat from these sightings was wholly lacking, related dangers might well exist from: a. Misidentification of actual enemy artifacts by defense personnel. b. Overloading of emergency channels with 'false' information... c. Subjectivity of public to mass hysteria and greater vulnerability to possible enemy psychological warfare."

The report continued, creating what they thought of a need to reduce or suppress UFO reports. "Although not the concern of the CIA, the first two of these problems may seriously affect the Air Defense intelligence system, and should be studied by experts, possibly under the ADC. If U.F.O.'s become discredited in a reaction to the 'flying saucer' scare, or if reporting channels are saturated with false and poorly documented reports, our capability of detecting hostile activity will be reduced. Dr. Page noted that more competent screening or filtering of reported sightings at or near the source is required, and that this can be accomplished by an educational program."

This, at first, seems that this is a reasonable idea. But in the event of a Soviet attack, the communications would not come solely through the communications centers at various levels of command. Those on the front line of the attack, meaning those who were manning the various radar fences, who were at the various forward Air Force bases, would communicate more directly with their superiors.

In other words, no one would rely on a classified message that needed to be encrypted, decrypted and carried from the message center to the headquarters, wherever that headquarters might be. In 1952, those at the forward bases would have picked up the telephone, one of the many dedicated lines, and spoken directly to their superiors, probably telling them that a coded message would be coming, if it was needed.

But the idea of an educational program to teach people to spot the natural and astronomical phenomena did make some sense. If the public was more familiar with the phenomena that appeared in the sky including meteors, Venus, and weather events, then the number of UFO reports might be significantly reduced because those who once might have been

fooled would now be able to tell the difference between Venus and something flying in the atmosphere.

The problem arises when the whole of the educational program is examined. Under that banner, the panel recommended, “The Panel’s concept of a broad educational program integrating efforts of all concerned agencies was that it should have two major aims: training and ‘debunking.’”

Some of the ideas offered weren’t all that bad. The training, according to the Panel, would result in witnesses being able to identify those “unusually illuminated objects... This training should result in a marked reduction in reports caused by misidentified cases and resultant confusion.”

The problem with the Panel’s report came in the next paragraph where they used the word, “debunking.” While almost all agree that to debunk myths, legends and fantasies is a good idea, here the suggestion seemed to be a propaganda campaign aimed not at explaining those cases that were misidentifications, misinterpretations, hoaxes, or mistaken identity, but in simply convincing people there was nothing to the UFO reports. In other words, debunk the whole of the UFO phenomena with little regard to accuracy of the debunking information used.

Robertson wrote, “The ‘debunking’ aim would result in reduction in public interest in ‘flying saucers’ which today evokes a strong psychological reaction. This education could be accomplished by mass media such as television, motion pictures, and popular articles. Basis of such education would be actual case histories which had been puzzling at first but later explained. As in the case of conjuring tricks, there is much less stimulation if the ‘secret’ is known. Such a program should tend to reduce the current gullibility of the public and consequently their susceptibility to clever hostile propaganda. The Panel noted that the general absence of Russian propaganda based on a subject with so many obvious possibilities for exploitation might indicate a possible Russian official policy.”

The Panel discussed what they had meant by an educational program. Many in the UFO community have seen it as more of a “disinformation” program designed to explain all UFO sightings in the mundane so that interest in UFOs would disappear. It was to convince

people that UFOs were nothing more than misidentifications, hallucinations and hoaxes and not to actually investigate anything.

To take this even further, it was suggested by some who were at many of the Panel's meetings, that the information presented to the members had been "managed" to lead to several predetermined conclusions. The Panel had a limited life; they were unable to examine some of the sightings in detail. When there was a stumble, Robertson always had a quick answer.

If the Panel was designed, not to actually review the status of the UFO investigations and to suggest that study of them would result only in the wasting of resources, but to also reduce public interest, could the designer have had enough confidence in his own abilities to micro manage the results that all the panel participants would come to the conclusion he wanted? How could he be sure that some wild card wouldn't jerk his plans off the rails and lead the Panel in another direction?

This seems to have been a big risk to take. It also implies that those managing the information at the top were not afraid that too much would be learned by the Panel members. If the plan had been to convince the Panel members that there was little to the UFO sightings so that this impression could be conveyed to the general public, it seemed to have worked. According to Swords, Robertson, Chadwell and the others at the CIA were just the sort of heavy thinkers who could design just such a plan and to pull it off. When all is said and done, the only member of the Panel who was even mildly unbiased was Thornton Page and he was overwhelmed by the prestige of the other, high-powered panel members and the personality of Robertson.

The Panel's ultimate purpose, it might be said, was to determine if UFOs posed a threat to national security. The cases they reviewed contained little more than sighting information and nothing to suggest UFOs might be hostile or threaten national security. Such a conclusion would come later, in the form of the Brookings Institute study that would examine the results of two societies learning about the other. That is to say, when a technologically superior society meets with a technologically inferior one, the inferior society ceases to exist. That doesn't mean it was conquered. It means the possible introduction of an advanced technology will radically alter the society so that it begins to need that

superior technology to survive, and by doing that, is changed, many times for the worse.

The odd thing about the Robertson Panel was its suggestion that UFO investigations through Project Blue Book be expanded and that the project lose its classified status. Robertson believed that the best way to debunk the UFOs and to educate the public was to make everything transparent, or rather seem to be transparent.

Robertson was the first of the salvos fired at the UFO project. The very existence of the investigation suggested that there was something to the sightings and caused people to ask embarrassing questions. To end that, those on both the civilian and the military chains of command, suggested that the investigation should be ended. A review of the Project Blue Book administration files proves this.

In 1957, after the great wave of sightings that included those around Levelland, Texas, examined in depth earlier, the Assistant Secretary of the Air Force, Richard Horner, during a radio discussion on UFOs said, “The Air Force is not hiding any UFO information and I do not qualify this in anyway.” That is to say, the investigations were transparent.

Major General Dougher

Colonel Edward H. Wynn, Deputy for Science and Components, in April 1960, said, “Probable causes for sightings based on limited information should be accepted.” Or, we’re not sure what it was, but here is the solution anyway.

Contrary to this seemingly open policy of UFO investigation, and the lack of hidden information, Air Force regulations, published in the wake of the Robertson Panel required that no information be released in all UFO investigations where there was no immediate explanation. All inquiries were to be addressed to the Office of Public Information. In December 1958, this idea was reaffirmed. An officer assigned to the UFO project reported that there were “certain deficiencies” that he

thought “must be corrected.” He was referring to Air Force Regulation 200-2, “dated 5 February 1958… which stipulates… to explain or identify all UFO sightings.”

On April 1, 1960, in a letter to Major General Dougher, A. Francis Archer, a scientific advisor to Project Blue Book, wrote, “I have tried to get Bluebook out of ATIC for 10 years… and do not agree that the loss of prestige to the UFO project is a disadvantage.” He wanted the status Blue Book derived from being associated with one of the Air Force’s intelligence function to be lost. Public information did not carry the cache of the Air Technical Intelligence Center.

Lt. Col. Robert Friend

In 1962, when Lieutenant Colonel Robert Friend was running Blue Book, he wrote to his headquarters suggesting that the project be handed over to a civilian agency that would word its report in a way so that the Air Force could drop the investigation. He thought the appearance of an unbiased civilian organization would let the Air Force close Blue Book. This was an idea that was carried out five years later.

At the same time, Edward Trapnell, an assistant to the Secretary of the Air Force, when talking to Dr. Robert Calkins of the Brookings Institute, said almost the same thing. Find a civilian committee to study the problem, then conclude it the way the Air Force wanted it concluded. One of the stipulations was that this committee should say some positive things about the Air Force handling of the problem.

In March, 1966, there was a series of sightings around the Dexter, Hillsdale and Ann Arbor areas of Michigan, which we examined at length here. Some scientists suggested swamp gas as an answer, and while some were offended by the claim, many in the news media embraced the answer. Among those who didn’t was Gerald Ford, at the time the

House Minority Leader. He called for congressional investigations, which were held on April 5, 1966.

Lt. Col. Hector Quintanilla

That hearing involved only three witnesses; the Secretary of the Air Force, Harold Brown, J. Allen Hynek, Blue Book's scientific consultant and Major Hector Quintanilla, then the chief of Blue Book. Brown suggested that UFOs posed no threat to national security and that there was no objective evidence that they came from outer space. He suggested that the Air Force investigation had been both thorough and objective and that they could easily deal with the situation. He did seem to think that a better scientific investigation of the sightings might yield some information that would be of benefit.

Hynek, who then defended himself from the battering he took after the swamp gas solution for the Michigan sightings, also suggested that he:

> …would be derelict in my scientific responsibility to the Air Force if I did not point out that the whole UFO phenomenon might have aspects to make it worthy of scientific attention…. Specifically, it is my opinion that the body of data accumulated since 1948… deserves close scrutiny by a civilian panel of physical and social scientists and that this panel should be asked to examine the UFO problem critically for the express purpose of determining whether a major problem really exists.

The Committee Chairman, the late L. Mendel Rivers, agreed and surprisingly, so did the Air Force. Brown must have seen this as a way of ending Blue Book and the whole Air Force involvement in the UFO problem. It was, in essence, what others had been saying for more than a decade. Find a civilian agency that would undertake the study, and say what the Air Force wanted it to say.

It took another two years and a survey of a number of universities, but the Air Force finally managed to convince Dr. Edward U. Condon at the University of Colorado, that he should take over the UFO study. For half a million dollars, scientists at the university would study the UFO question using the criterion set up by the Air Force and outlined by so many others in the past.

On January 16, 1967, before any real work began, Lieutenant Colonel Robert R. Hippler, of the Science Division, Directorate of Science and Technology, part of the HQ, USAF in Washington, D.C. wrote to Dr. Edward U. Condon. The letter was received by the committee on January 23.

Hippler wrote:

> This is an informal letter expressing some thoughts on our roundtable discussion on the UFO program, and does not constitute the formal letter requested by John Coleman.
>
> There are two items which leave me a little uneasy. The first is the Wertheimer Hypothesis, and its corollary that one cannot “prove” the negative on extraterrestrial visitations.
>
> The second is an apparently obscure understanding of what the Air Force wants. Since I will discuss this second item, you will see why this is an informal letter expressing my own opinion–and hence is not binding on you.
>
> On the first item, I wish to present a slightly different approach. When we first took over the UFO program, the first order of business, even before approaching AFOSR, was to assure ourselves that the situation was as straightforward as logic indicated it should be. In other words, we too looked to see if by some chance the intelligence people have information other than what exists in Blue Book files. There were no surprises. While there exist some things which may forever remain unknowable in the universe, certainly an extraterrestrial visitation must fall in the “knowable” category. An alien would not come light years merely to pick up surreptitiously some rocks, or melt holes in reservoir ice (al la Edwards). He would have long since gone through the geologic bit, and would be fairly knowledgeable of the make-up of stars and planets. You have stated that President Truman was unaware of the Manhattan Project until he became President. In that same time

period, physicists not connected with the project were aware of the possibilities and knew that something was going on.

No one knows of a visitation. It should therefore follow there has been no visitation to date. As you are aware, if UFOs are an Air Force “sacred cow,” the other services in the usual competitive spirit would not be constrained by this “sacred cow.” Nor is the “fear of panic” holding anyone’s tongue. No one is reticent about the horror of an ICBM attack. Words such as “end of civilization” have been used many times.

This brings us to the second item. When you have looked into some sightings and examined some Blue Book records and become acquainted with the true state of affairs, you must consider the cost of the Air Force program on UFOs, and determine if the taxpayer should support this for the next decade. It will be at least that long before another independent study can be mounted to see if the Air Force can get out from under this program.

If the contract is up before you have laid the proper groundwork for a proper recommendation, an extension of the contract would be less costly than another decade of operating Project Blue Book.

Hippler signed his name.

Robert Low, in his response, surely written with Condon’s advice and approval replied:

Maybe we will find that extraterrestrial visitations have occurred, but there’s no way to demonstrate that they haven’t. This is a logical problem that can’t be skirted, and I’m sure, if we were to miss the point, the National Academy would set us straight. ...

We don’t know what technology exists on other planets. I think one can assert, however, that, for a spaceship to get to the earth from a planet outside the solar system, it would be necessary to employ a technology from more advanced than we enjoy.

Since we have no knowledge of that technology, speculation on it brings one right into science fiction, and once one has crossed that boundary the sky is the limit. He can argue anything, and the rules of scientific evidence and methodology have been abandoned. So there is no point in stepping across the boundary, except to engage in idle speculation! Such speculation isn’t useful in helping to close in on an answer to the problem of whether there have been extraterrestrial visitors or not.

> And probability won't help. You mention that the fear of panic is not holding anyone's tongue. That's an extremely good point; I had not thought of it. On the second page, you indicate what you believe the Air Force wants of us, and I am very glad to have your opinion. In fact, you have answered quite directly the question that I have asked - you may remember that I came back to it a couple of times – at our meeting on Thursday evening, January 12.

Low then signed off, after suggesting that he and Condon would be in Washington, D.C. and they could "perhaps" get together. This attitude (of getting rid of Blue Book as suggested by Hippler) had been established in official communications for a long time.

Wright-Patterson Air Force Base

The point here is that the Air Force was communicating with Condon about what they, in Colorado, were supposed to do. It's not much of a scientific investigation if the results are known before the research begins especially when the evidence found does not support the conclusions drawn.

There was another aspect of this. Project Blue Book changed about the time that the search began for a university to study UFOs. Rather than gathering data from around the country, those at Blue Book were investigating sightings in the areas around Dayton, Ohio, and Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. Investigations of sightings in other areas of the country were handled by officers at the closest Air Force base. Many times, the data recovery were not forwarded to Blue Book. Most of it was sent to the University of Colorado instead or retained at the base where the investigation originated. Air Force regulations at that time did not require sightings that had been identified in the mundane be forwarded to Blue Book. Only those that were unsolved needed to be forwarded, but it seems that in that time frame, the unidentified sightings were

forwarded to the Condon Committee instead. It doesn't seem that anyone worried about what Air Force Regulations required.

By June 1, 1968, the Condon Committee had completed their work and they had to begin the task of writing their report. That report, entitled *Scientific Study of Unidentified Flying Objects*, all 1485 pages, was provided to the National Academy of Sciences, on January 8, 1969, which endorsed the conclusions. Those conclusions were, of course, those set out by Hippler at the beginning of the study but that made no different. On January 9, the report was released to the public.

It seems that most scientists and most journalists, read the summary written by Condon, who had made his opinion known long before the study had concluded. In fact, Condon told a group in Corning, New York, that he knew there was nothing to UFOs but he wasn't supposed to reach that conclusion for another eighteen months.

With the release of the report, most of the scientists and reporters treated it as if that it had ended any question about UFOs. *Nature* reported that it was a "sledgehammer for nuts," meaning, of course, that the UFO community and the true believers would be unable to suggest a rational response. Condon and the boys had ended the discussion with their massive, scientific analysis.

Lieutenant Carmon Marano

A good example of the Air Force attitude about UFOs, or maybe more accurately its hostility, can be seen in two sightings from July 1969 in Pensacola, Florida. One appeared in the official file, but the other only in the unofficial files that had been saved by Lieutenant Carmon Marano. Both the sightings were investigated by Major Ben Gershater.

There were several witnesses involved in the first sighting and Gershater identified the object as a kite. Once the identity had been established, there seemed to be no objection to it by the witnesses.

There was a hand-written note in the file by Marano, saying as much. This seemed to be a rather straight forward investigation into a mystery object that was identified as something mundane.

It is the unofficial document forwarded up the chain of command that does not appear in the official files, that demonstrates the attitude of those continuing to investigate UFO sightings. By this time, though, it is clear that Air Force involvement was basically over. Gershater was enraged by what he considered to be a waste of his valuable time. He created a "Memorandum for 'Racket', a play on a "Memorandum for Record." He entitled it, "Subject: UFO Report; or: The Credulity, Imbecility, Gullibility and/or Hysteria of Some Jerks of the Current Under-30 Generation (U) [the "U" meaning that it was unclassified]." According to the first paragraph:

> 1. At approx. 1900, TUES, 1 July 1969, Sergeant HERRON… telephoned me at home, re: a UFO report relayed to him by the SDO [Staff Duty Officer], NAS [Naval Air Station] Pensacola (LCDR Walker], to whom the UFO sighting was reported by a Mr. RICK [last name redacted but is HALL], radio station WPFA News Bureau… Based on available info, I decided it would "keep" until morning, since the "silver-colored, cone-shaped object with negative sound was stationary at 1,500' over the Town and Country Shopping Center, next to the radio station in Pensacola". (Reported by civilian Mr. Keeble, of NAS Pensacola Base Ops).
>
> …4. I informed Mr. Hall that the following had determined that his UFO was a kite, a child's plaything, flown at the end of a long cord, by a child!!!!

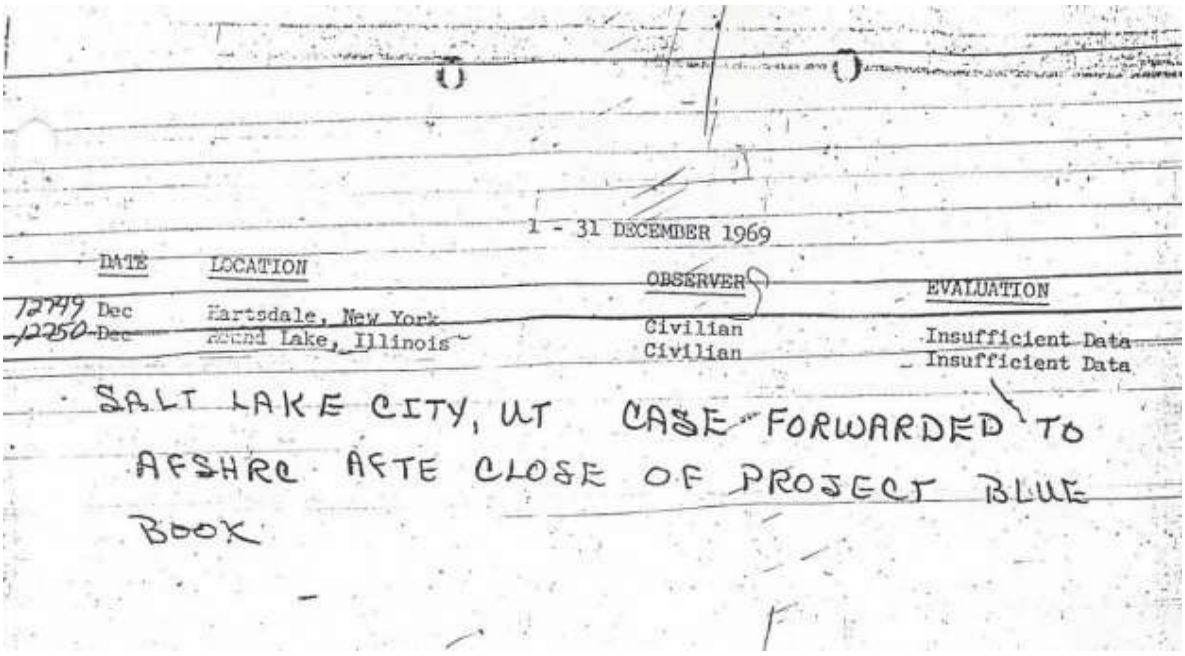
There was nothing in the report to explain how Gershater determined that the UFO was a kite. He does, however, explain the amount of time that he wasted on this investigation, how it kept him from finishing other, important work, the waste of the secretary's time and that of the Pensacola Meteorological Section. He also noted that, "But the relative stupidity of Mr. Hall, and others of his gullible WPFA colleagues had reached saturation-point a 100%."

Gershater wasn't finished with his UFO investigations. On July 22, 1969, he was again investigating a sighting, this time by two Air Force enlisted members. One was a college graduate and the other had two years at a community college. According to his report:

> Both claimed they saw a round UFO, white-colored, circular shape of half-dime size, with “lighted wings” in an inverted-V extending from it, to the ESE…. Neither could estimate the altitude. They stated that it was generally “stationary” for the next two (2) hours but occasionally moved slightly to the left, to the right, upwards and downwards, in 90-degree motions, then returning to its position “beneath, above, or to the edge of a stationary cloud, oval in shape.” Both were unable to estimate the size of the cloud and insisted that it remained stationary for 2.5 hours while over scattered clouds drifted in from South to North, culminating in a thunder-storm around dawn…. They estimated angle-of-elevation 50-60 degrees above the horizon for the UFO.

Then, as if to prove that he had no interest in investigation of UFO sightings, he wrote, “AIC [name redacted], the college graduate, seriously made the statement to me, “Of course, no planet is visible to the naked eye.” I spent a minute enlightening him re: Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn, to say nothing of the planet Terra (Earth).”

Although Gershater provided no explanation for the sighting, he did tell the witnesses that no one else had reported it, implying that if something had been there, someone else would have seen it. He asked the witness if he wished to withdraw his sighting, but the witness said it was up to Gershater. The Major responded that he needed a verbal commitment from the witness. Gershater wrote, “Finally, somewhat reluctantly, he agreed to withdraw his UFO report, re-emphasizing that he and Airman [redacted] felt that it was their ‘duty to report it.’”



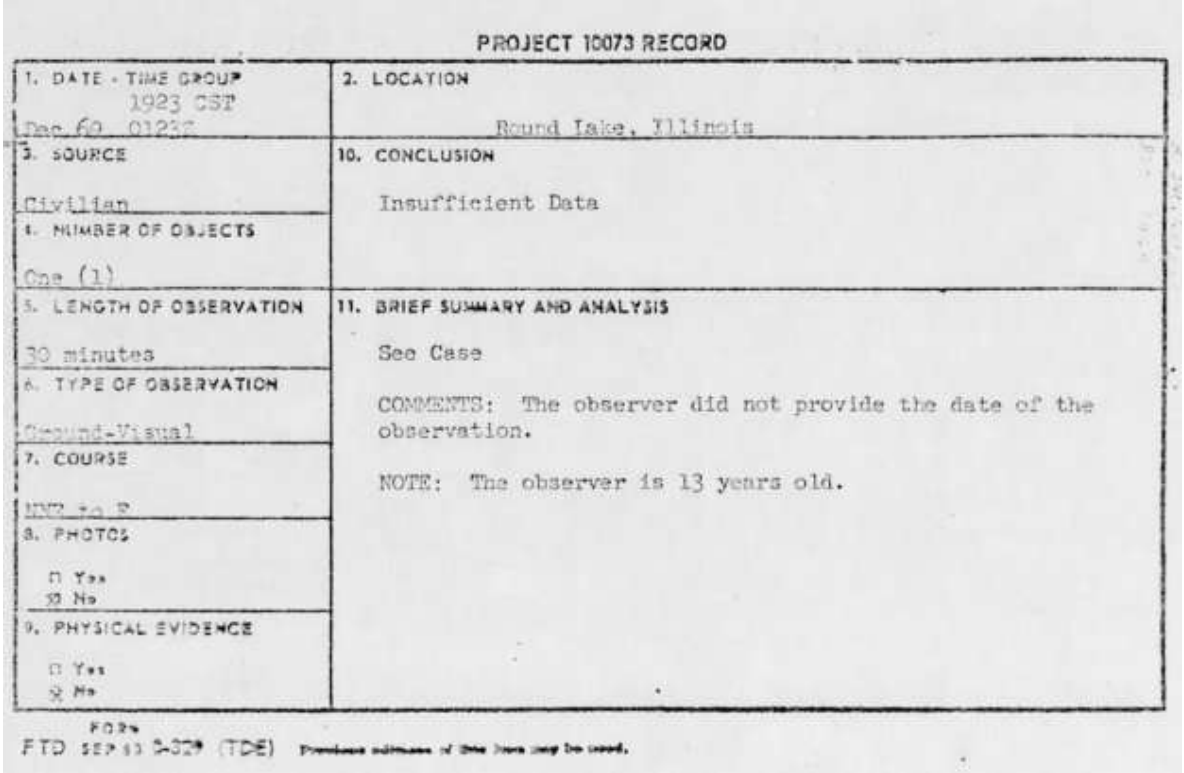
1 - 31 DECEMBER 1969

DATE	LOCATION	OBSERVER	EVALUATION
12249 Dec	Hartsdale, New York	Civilian	Insufficient Data
12250 Dec	Round Lake, Illinois	Civilian	Insufficient Data

SALT LAKE CITY, UT CASE FORWARDED TO AFSHRC AFTE CLOSE OF PROJECT BLUE BOOK

Last page in the Blue Book Index.

By the time of these sightings, it was fairly clear that UFO investigation was not a priority by the Air Force. The Condon Committee, with its negative conclusions, had been released to the public. Newspapers reported on the lack of findings and those left at Blue Book, as well as the UFO officers at other Air Force Bases, were



PROJECT 10073 RECORD

1. DATE - TIME GROUP 1923 CST Dec 69 01232	2. LOCATION Round Lake, Illinois
3. SOURCE Civilian	10. CONCLUSION Insufficient Data
4. NUMBER OF OBJECTS One (1)	
5. LENGTH OF OBSERVATION 30 minutes	11. BRIEF SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS See Case COMMENTS: The observer did not provide the date of the observation. NOTE: The observer is 13 years old.
6. TYPE OF OBSERVATION Ground-Visual	
7. COURSE NW? to E	
8. PHOTOS ☐ Yes ☒ No	
9. PHYSICAL EVIDENCE ☐ Yes ☒ No	

FORM
FTD SEP 63 3-329 (TDE) Previous editions of this form may be used.

just going through the motions or actively discouraging

One of the very last cases reported to Project Blue Book.

witnesses from making any reports. They all could see the writing on the wall, which is reflected in the statistics for those last months.

Although Quintanilla was officially the last chief of Blue Book, he was not the final officer in charge. It seems that once Quintanilla left Blue Book, the man in charge was Lieutenant Carmon Marano. His job and that of those working with him, was to close down the project. They were to clean out the files, deal with the classified information, and still investigate UFO sightings. It is clear from the master index that little in the way of investigation was being done. In September 1969, there were only eight cases reported to Blue Book, all but two were from Ohio, and of those eight, half were listed as “Insufficient Data.”

In November 1969, only four cases made it to Blue Book. Two were from Ohio and all four were explained in the mundane. In December, 1969, only two cases were reported, neither from the Ohio area, and both labeled as “Insufficient Data.”

There is a note for a third case. In a hand-written note on the index. It said, “Salt Lake City, UT case forward to AFSHRC afte [sic] close of

Project Blue Book."

On December 17, 1969, the Secretary of the Air Force, Robert C. Seamans, Jr., announced the end of Blue Book. What had started in a near panic in 1947 when the first sightings were officially reported, had evolved into an additional duty that annoyed many of the officers tasked with it. After spending millions of dollars, the Air Force could announce that it was no longer interested in UFOs. There was no matter of national security and there was nothing of scientific value that could be learned by further study. The UFO question had been answered, at least to the satisfaction of those who had been required to investigate it. The phenomenon was nothing more than illusion, delusion, misidentification, hallucination and hoaxes… which they had been saying for years. Now it was over…

Or so they thought.

Appendix A: The Blue Book Unidentified Cases

In 1975 I learned, wholly by accident, that the Project Blue Book files had been declassified and were open for public review. This was back when the files were housed at Maxwell Air Force Base and before they had been microfilmed and moved to the National Archives in Washington, D.C. I managed to convince a magazine to give me an assignment about this. I told the editor that I could get into the Project Blue Book files. I didn't tell him that anyone could do it if they knew that had just been declassified.

Robert Charles Cornett and I drove down to Maxwell and spent days in the files. When we arrived, those manning the desks weren't going to allow us in, even though we were, sort of military in that we were enrolled in Air Force ROTC and had a letter of introduction from the detachment commander. While we tried to figure out our next move, we were told to wait for Mr. Smith from Washington. We had no idea who this might be or why we had to wait. He arrived, talked to us for a minute, and then told them to let us see whatever we wanted. He then left and the asked what we wanted to see first.

We were at something of a loss at that point. I asked for a couple of specific case files, based on what I knew about UFOs. They brought them to us in a small room that we could use as a work station. I don't remember how we learned there was an index of all the cases, but we did. Once we asked for that, we spent two days going through the index, writing down all the unidentified cases, many of the photo and physical evidence cases, and any others that caught our attention. We included the names of the witnesses, still much in evidence in those files because the Air Force had yet to redact them. I even burned up several rolls of file photographing the information because they wouldn't allow us to use the copying facilities there. Remember, and I hate to say this, but we were there in the mid-1970s. It was a much more primitive time.

Sometime later, long after we had left, the files were transferred to the National Archives in Washington, D.C. and were then microfilmed. Before the microfilming was done, a number of Air Force officers read each file, attempting to black out the names of all the witnesses. This was done because the Air Force believed, and it might have had some

truth to it, that when the witnesses had been interviewed by the Air Force officers gathering data, they didn’t expect their names to be public. When the files were re-released to the public after the review by the Air Force, and were made available on microfilm, it seemed that one of the most critical pieces of evidence had been removed. The names of the witnesses had been redacted.

When I learned about this sanitization, I thought I had a record that was unique in the UFO field. I could put the names back in. Don Berliner, of the Washington based Fund for UFO Research, seems to have had the chance to see the files when they first appeared at the National Archives. He did the same thing that I and Cornett had done. He wrote down the vital information so that he too, could put the names back. Like me, he spent days going through the files, writing down the names of the witnesses. Berliner, much to his credit, apparently could think of no way to cash in on the information. He posted a great deal of it in one of the UFO newsgroups on the Internet. Apparently, he thought that it might be of use to other researchers who hadn't had the access to the files that he did.

But there is one other point that should be made here. As I read the case files for this work, there wasn't one in which I didn't find the names of those witnesses or deduce who the witness or witnesses were. In other words, the Air Force officers who had the job of blacking out the names, did a really lousy job of it. In every case I was interested in, I could find the names of the witnesses somewhere in the Blue Book file.

For example, in the Chiles and Whitted case of 1948, I found a statement written by Chiles for the Air Force. The officer responsible had removed Chiles' name from both the return address and the signature block of his letter to the Air Force. That same officer had removed all references to Chiles or Whitted in the body of the text. What he or she didn't do was remove it from the all capital statement on the top of the letter. In big, bold letters, it said, "STATEMENT OF CAPTAIN CLARENCE S. CHILES." And, throughout that case, I found additional references to both Chiles and Whitted, including a number of newspaper articles in which both men were not only named but whose photograph had appeared.

Along with the Chiles and Whitted case, there were a number of other sightings that seemed to be related to it. That same Air Force officer worked very hard to take out all the names of those witnesses as well,

except for a handwritten chart of all the sightings from late July 1948 that included the locations, times, directions and other information and, of course, the names of every single witness in this case. That's right, a chart that contained all the names that made it even easier than having to search through the various documents that included newspaper and magazine articles.

In the Kenneth Arnold case, as but another example, there was a transcript of a telephone interview by an Air Force officer with him. The Air Force officers redacting the files had taken out Arnold's name at the beginning of the statements made by Arnold. But, again, at the top, in big, black letters, someone had written, in grease pencil, “Arnold Case."

Finding the names in the Florida scout master case was somewhat more difficult. I could find the scout master's name, but only the last name of one of the scouts until I reached the end. There was a clipping that contained the names and ages of each of the boy scouts. As I wrote the chapter, I thought about leaving the names out because they were, after all, just boys. And then I realized that each of them, eleven or twelve in 1952, were now older than I am.

That was the thing I found so ridiculous. They would so carefully remove the names from the reports, letters and other documents and then leave them in the newspaper articles that accompanied so many of the cases. In some files, they had blacked out the names in the clippings, but always left enough information that, if I hadn't found the names elsewhere in the file, I could have tracked down the newspaper or magazine to learn who those witnesses were.

It became something of a joke to me. How far would I have to read before I could find the names? In the Salt Lake City daylight disc case, I only found one name in the file itself, but the newspaper clippings that followed contained all the names. It was difficult from the information in the file to determine who had made which statement, but there was just enough that I could put it together.

So, the work that I had thought of as unique was not. It had been duplicated by Don Berliner. And had neither of us done it, we could have figured out from the files, the names of those who were the witnesses. I'm happy that the Air Force officers didn't take their jobs seriously. They could have, with a little additional work, made it impossible to figure out who the witnesses were. In some cases, that could have been a deadly blow to the work that needs to be done.

There is a postscript to all this. A fellow named Rob Mercer, who has an interest in UFOs, often searched Craig's List for UFO related material. Occasionally, he would find something. One of those finds was a box that held information that had once been part of Blue Book. He managed to learn the name of the man who had retrieved the material as Blue Book was closed down. When Mercer called the man, Carmon Morano, he learned of more boxes of UFO documents, which Marano sent him. In one of the boxes were the thick files of the index and it had not been redacted. Mercer had a complete list of all the cases and all the names that went with them.

What follows are most of the unidentifieds from the files with most of the names plugged back in. The list also contains some additional cases that the Air Force believed they had solved, though I don't accept their analysis. For those that aren't in Blue Book as an "unidentified" I have included the Air Force solution. Please don't construe that as an acceptance of the Air Force claim. It is a mere reporting of all the information.

The Unidentified Cases:

June 24, 1947: Mt. Rainier, Washington. 3:00 p.m. Kenneth Arnold watched as nine crescent-shaped objects flashed among the mountain peaks "like saucers skipping on a pond." Air Force conclusion: Mirage

June 24, 1947: Cascade Mountains, Washington. 3:00 p.m. Fred Johnson. Saw a number of "disc-shaped" craft overhead and noticed that his compass was spinning wildly.

July 3, 1947: Harborside, Maine. 2:30 p.m. Astronomer John Cole of South Brooksville, Me watched 10-15 seconds while ten very light objects, with two dark forms to their left, moved like a swarm of bees to the northwest. A loud roar was heard.

July 4, 1947; over Emmet, Idaho. 8:17 p.m. United Air Lines Capt. E.J. Smith, First Officer Ralph Stevens, Stewardess Marty Morrow all watched for 12-15 minutes while four objects with flat bottoms and rough tops moved at varying speeds, with one high and to the right of the others.

July 6, 1947: Fairfield-Suisan Air Base, California. Capt. and Mrs. James Burniston watched for 1 minute while one object having no wings or tail rolled from side-to-side three times and then flew away very fast to the southeast.

July 7, 1948: Phoenix, Arizona. William Rhodes. Watched a "heel-shaped" object that circled near his home. Took two photographs of the object which disappeared a few minutes later. Air Force conclusion: Hoax

July 8, 1947: Muroc Air Base, California. 9:30 a.m. lst Lt. Joseph McHenry, T/Sgt Ruvolo, S/Sgt Nauman, Janette Scotte watched for an unstated length of time while two silver disc-shaped or spherical objects, apparently made of metal flew a wide circular pattern. One of them later flew a tighter circle.

July 9, 1947: Meridian, Idaho. 12:17 Idaho Statesman aviation editor and former (AAF) B-29 pilot Dave Johnson watched for more than 10 seconds from an Idaho Air National Guard AT-6 while a black disc, which stood out against the clouds, made a half-roll and then a stair-step climb.

July 10, 1947: Harmon Field, Newfoundland, Canada. Between 3 and 5 p.m. Three ground crewmen, including Mr. Leidy, for Pan American Airways watched briefly while one translucent disc- or wheel-shaped object flew very fast, leaving a dark blue trail. It then ascended and cut a path through the clouds.

July 29, 1947: Hamilton Air Base, California. 2:50 p.m. Assistant Base Operations Officer Capt. William Rhyerd, ex-AAF B-29 pilot Ward Stewart. Watched for unknown length of time while two round, shiny, white objects with estimated 15-25 foot diameters, flew 3-4 times the apparent speed of a P-80, also in sight. One object flew straight and level. The other weaved from side-to-side like an escort fighter.

Sept. 3, 1947: Oswego, Oregon. 12:15 p.m. Mrs. Raymond Dupui. Watched for unknown length of time as 12-15 round, silver objects flew an unstated pattern.

Oct., 1947: Dodgeville, Wisconsin. Unidentified witness watched for 1 hour while an undescribed object flew circles.

Oct. 14, 1947: 11 mi. NNE of Cave Creek, Arizona. Noon Fighter pilot J.L. Clark, a civilian pilot named Anderson, an unidentified third man watched 45-60 seconds while one 3-foot flying wing shaped object, which looked black against the white clouds and red against the blue sky,

flew straight at an estimated 380 m.p.h., at 8-10,000 feet, from northwest to southeast.

April 5, 1948: Holloman AFB, New Mexico. Afternoon. Geophysics Lab balloon observers Alsen, Johnson, and Chance saw two irregular, round, white or golden objects. One made three loops then rose and disappeared rapidly. The other flew in a fast arc to the west during the 3O second sighting.

July 29, 1948: Indianapolis, Indiana. 9:88 a.m. James Toney, Robert Huggins, both employees of a rug cleaning firm watched a single shiny aluminum object, shaped something like an airplane's propeller, with 10-12 small cups protruding from either blade. Estimated size 6-8' long, 1.5-2' wide. The object glided across the road a few hundred feet in front of their vehicle and apparently went down in a wooded area. Sighting lasted a few seconds.

July 31, 1948: Indianapolis, Indiana. 8:25 a.m. Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Swigert; he was an electrician. Object was shaped like a cymbal, or domed disc; about 20' across and 6-8' thick, and was white without any shine. It flew straight and level from horizon to horizon in about 10 seconds, shimmering in the sun as if spinning.

July or August, 1948: In the vicinity of Marion, Virginia. Shortly after sunset. Max Abbott, flying a Bellanca Cruisair four-passenger private airplane watched a single bright white light as it accelerated and turned up a valley.

Sept. 23, 1948: San Pablo, California. 12 noon. Sylvester Bentham and retired U.S. Army Col. Horace Eakins saw two objects, one of which was a buff or grey rectangle with vertical lines and the other a translucent "amoeba" with a dark spot near the center. The arms of the "amoeba" undulated. Both objects travelled very fast.

Oct. 15, 1948: Fusuoka, Japan. 11:05 p.m. Pilot Halter and radar operator Hemphill of a P-61 "Black Widow" night fighter. Up to six objects tracked on radar, only one seen visually. Dull or dark object shaped like a dirigible with a flat bottom and clipped tail end. Six seen on radar separately. Pilot attempted to close on visual object, but it dove away fast.

Dec. 3, 1948: Fairfield-Suisan AFB, California. 8:15 p.m. Air Force sergeant, control tower operator watched a single round, white light that flew for 25 seconds with varying speed, bouncing motion, and finally a rapid erratic climb.

Jan. 4, 1949: Hickam Field, Hawaii. 2 p.m. USAF Capt. Paul Stoney saw one flat white, elliptical object with a matte top circled while oscillating to the right and left, and then sped away.

Jan. 27, 1949: Cortez-Bradenton, Florida. 10:20 p.m. Capt. Sames, acting chief of the Aircraft Branch, Eglin AFB, and Mrs. Sames watched for 25 minutes while a cigar-shaped object as long as two Pullman cars and having seven lighted square windows and throwing sparks, descended and then climbed with a bouncing motion at an estimated 400 mph.

March 17, 1949: Camp Hood, Texas. 7:52 p.m. The witnesses included guards of the 2nd Armored Division. While awaiting the start of a flare firing, they watched, for an hour, while eight large, green, red and white flare-like objects flew in generally straight lines.

April 3, 1949: Dillon, Montana. 11:55 a.m. Construction company owner Gosta Miller and three other unnamed persons. One object shaped like two plates attached face-to-face with matte bottom, bright aluminum top and was about 20' diameter, 4-5' thickness. It rocked or rotated in six cycles, descended, rocked, flew, rocked.

April 4, 1949: Merced, California. 10:20 p.m. William Parrott, former Air Force pilot watched one generally round object with a curved bottom and dull coloring. The object gave off a clicking sound until overhead. Parrott's dog reacted.

April 24, 1949: Arrey, New Mexico. l0:30 a.m. General Mills meteorologist and balloon expert C.B. Moore and others on a balloon launch crew. One white, round ellipsoid, about 2.5 times as long as wide. Donald Menzel believed this to a mirage.

April 28, 1949: Tucson, Arizona. 5:45 p.m. Howard Hann, Mr. Hubert, Tex Keahey. One bright, sausage-shaped object was observed for 40 minutes while it rolled and flew fast.

May 5, 1949: Ft. Bliss, Texas. 11:40 a.m. Army officers Maj. Day, Maj. Olhausen, Capt. Vaughn saw two oblong white discs, flying at an estimated 200-250 mph, make a shallow turn during the 30-50 second observation.

May 6, 1949: Livermore, California. 9:35 a.m. C. G. Green. Two shiny, disc-like objects rotated around each other and banked. Then one shot upwards with a grey trail and rejoined the other.

May 9, 1949: Tucson, Arizona. 2:30 p.m. M/Sgt. Troy Putnam. Two round, flat silvery objects, estimated to be 25' in diameter, flew 750-1,000

mph in banked but steady manner.

May 27, 1949: South-central Oregon. 2:25 p.m. Joseph Shell, ferrying SNJ trainer for North American Aviation, from Red Bluff, California, to Burns, Oregon. Five to eight oval objects, twice as long as wide, and 1/5 as thick. They flew in trail formation, with an interval equal to 3-4 times their length, except that the second and third were closer together.

July 24, 1949: Mountain Home, Idaho. 12 noon. Henry Clark, manager of a flying service, flying a Piper Clipper. Seven delta-shaped objects, 35-55' in span, 20-30' long, 2-5' thick; light colored except for a 12' diameter dark circle at the rear of each. They flew in a tight formation of twos with one behind, and made a perfect, but unbanked, turn. During the 10 minute sighting, they displayed decreasing smooth oscillations. Clark's engine ran rough during the sighting, and upon landing was found to have all its spark plugs burned out.

July 30, 1949: Mt. Hood, Oregon. 9 p.m. Northwest Airlines Capt. Thrush, two Portland control tower operators, and one flying instructor. One object with one white light and two red lights, maneuvered and hovered.

Feb 5, 1950: Teaticket, Massachusetts. 5:10 p.m. Marvin Odom, former U.S. Navy fighter pilot, USAF Lt. Philip Foushee, pilot from Otis AFB, and two others. Two thin, illuminated cylinders, one of which dropped a fireball, maneuvered together and then disappeared high and fast after 5 minutes.

Feb. 24, 1950: Albuquerque, New Mexico. 1:55 p.m. Municipal Airport Weather Observers Luther McDonald, Harrison Manson. One white, slightly elongated oval was watched for 1.5 minutes through a theodolite while it flew straight and level.

Feb. 25, 1950: Los Alamos, New Mexico. 3:55 p.m. Twelve Atomic Energy Commission security inspectors. One cylinder with tapered ends, silver and flashing, flew slow and then fast, fluttered and oscillated, and changed course. observations by individuals varied from 3 seconds to 2 minutes.

March 3, 1950: Selfridge AFB, Michigan. 11:05 p.m. Lt Frank Mattson. One intense, dull yellowish light descended vertically, then flew straight and level very fast for 4 minutes.

March 20, 1950: Stuggart, Arkansas. 9:26 p.m. Chicago & Southern Airlines Capt. Jack Adams, First Officer G. W. Anderson, Jr. One 100'

circular disc with 9-12 portholes along the lower side emitting a soft purple light, and a light at the top which flashed 3 times in 9 seconds, flew at not less than 1,000 m.p.h. It was seen for 25-35 seconds.

March 27, 1950: Motobo, Okinawa. 10:30 a.m. USAF radar operator Cpl. Bolfango. Tracked on radar for 2 minutes while it was stationary and then moved at 500 mph.

March 28, 1950: Santiago, Chile. 3:15 p.m. M/Sgt. Patterson, of the office of the U.S. Air Attache. One white object observed for 5-10 seconds through binoculars while it flew high and fast, crossing 30 degrees of sky.

March 29, 1950: Marrowbore Lake, Tennessee. 7 a.m. Real estate salesmen Whiteside and Williams. Six-twelve dark objects shaped like 300-lb. bombs, estimated 5 feet long. Flew 500 mph and descended, making a noise like wind blowing through the trees.

April 8, 1950: Kokomo, Indiana. 2 a.m. Earl Baker. One grey metallic disc, 50' in diameter, 15' thick; top-shaped with a "conning tower" at the top and three ports on the rim giving off a blue light. It hovered for 2 minutes, then flew away. Baker aroused from sleep by his dog.

April 14, 1950: Ft. Monmouth, New Jersey. 2:30 p.m. Army M/Sgt. James. Four rectangular, amber objects, about 3' by 4'. changed speed and direction rapidly; the group of objects rose and fell during the 3-4 minute sighting.

April 23, 1950: Red Bud, Illinois. 3:58 p.m. Dean Morgan, photographer, Mr. and Mrs. Greene, Donald Gene. Morgan photographed the object that was seen by the Greenes and Gene. The object hovered, and then shot away. Air Force conclusion: Not a case, information only.

May 7, 1950: Nine miles south of Ely, Nevada. 6:45 p.m. Mr. and Mrs. George Smith and their grandson. One silvery white object hovered at 100' altitude, moved back and forth for 10 minutes and then flew up and away. Air Force conclusion: No investigation.

May 24, 1950. Holloman Air Force Base, New Mexico. Morning. Photos taken by two stations on Video Camera. Two different objects and triangulation (sic) could not be effected. Photos sent to Dr Marichi at Cambridge. Air Force conclusion: Insufficient Data, file incomplete.

June 21, 1950: Hamilton Air Force Base, California. 1:35 a.m. Corporal Garland Pryor and SSGT Ellis Lorimer saw a disc-shaped object shooting a blue flame and traveling at over a thousand miles an

hour was seen. Air Force conclusion: Insufficient data. Report not in file. Case will be evaluated if file is located.

June 27, 1950: Texarkana, Texas. 7:50 a.m. Terrell and Yates, employees of Red River Arsenal saw one object, bright, shaped like two dishpans face-to-face, flew straight and level, fast for 4-5 seconds.

July 13, 1950: Redstone Arsenal, Alabama. 5 p.m. Two skilled Arsenal employees including Mr. Washburn saw one object, shaped like a bowtie, and like polished aluminum. Flew straight and level, then one triangle rotated 1/4 turn in the opposite direction and returned to its original position. The object then made a right-angle turn and accelerated away after at least 30 seconds.

Aug. 4, 1950: approx. 100 mi. SE of New York City. 10 a.m. EDT. Ship's Master Nils Lewring, Chief Mate Jacob Koelwyn, Third Mate, of M/V Marcala. One 10' cylindrical object at 50-100' altitude, flying with a churning or rotary motion, accelerated at end of 15 second sighting.

Aug. 20, 1950: Nicosia, Cyprus. 1:30 p.m. USAF MATS liaison officer Lt. William Ghormley, Col. W. V. Brown, Lt. Col. L.w. Brauer. One small, round, bright object flew fast, straight and level for 15-20 seconds.

Aug. 25, 1950: approx. 250 mi. SW of Bermuda. 8 p.m. B-29 radarman SSGT William Shaffer. Radar observation, plus possible blue streak 3 minutes later. B-29 followed unidentified target, then passed it at l/4-mile distance, target followed for 5 minutes, then passed B-29 and sped away. Total time of tracking: 20 minutes.

Aug. 30, 1950: Sandy Point, Newfoundland, Canada. 1:30 p.m. Three local employees, including Kaeel and Alexander, of the Air Force Base. A dark, barrel-shaped object with a pole down from it into the water, flew at 3-5 mph and 15-20' altitude for 5 minutes.

Sept. 3, 1950: Spokane, Washington. 2 p.m. Maj R.J. Gardiner, Mrs. Gardiner and neighbor (former saw three objects, others saw one). Metallic bronze discs, 20-30' long, 2-6' thick. Moved independently and erratically for 5 minutes.

Sept. 20, 1950: Kit Carson, Colorado. 10:49 a.m. The witness is identified only as a reliable source. Two large, round, glowing objects and three smaller, internally lit objects. Two hovered for 1 minute, moved, and three smaller ones came from behind or within the two larger objects, and all sped upward and away.

Sept. 21, 1950: Provincetown, Massachusetts. 9:52 a.m. M.I.T. research associate and Air National Guard Maj. M.H. Ligda. Radar tracking of one object during M.I.T tracking of USAF flight of F-84 or F-86 jet fighters. Object speed was 22 miles/minute (l,200 mph), made turn of 11-12 G's acceleration during 1 minute observation.

Oct. 15, 1950: Oak Ridge, Tennessee. 3:20 p.m. Atomic Energy Commission Trooper Rymer, J. Moneymaker, Capt. Zarzecki. Two shiny silver objects shaped like bullet or bladder. They dove with a smoke trail and one vanished. The other hovered at 5-6, altitude, 50' away, left and returned several times somewhat further away.

Oct. 15, 1950: Pope AFB, North Carolina. Witness identified only as Daniel. Listed as "unidentified" in index, but no other data available.

Oct 15, 1950: Pope AFB, North Carolina. Witness: Woodward. Same as previous observation.

Oct. 23, 1950: Bonlee, North Carolina. 12:42 p.m. Ex-USAF pilot Frank Risher. One aluminum object shaped like a dirigible or Convair C-99 cargo plane, with 3 portholes, arrived from southeast, hovered 3-5 seconds and flew away to the south-south-east at end of 40 second sighting.

Nov. 5, 1950: Oak Ridge, Tennessee. 11:55 a.m. Fairchild Aircraft illustrator Don Patrick. One translucent object, light grey with dark core, shaped like a pear or bean. Flew for 5-10 minutes with rapid, darting movements.

Dec. 2, 1950: Nanyika, Kenya. 10:50 a.m. Mr. and Mrs. L. Scott. One pearly, iridescent object with a flattened top, spun while hovering and made a sound like bees buzzing.

Dec. 6, 1950: Ft. Myers, Florida. 5 p.m. Harry Lamp and four boys, using 1O-power binoculars. One 75' object, 3-4' thick, bubble on top, silver with a red rim having two white and two orange jets along it. The center revolved when the object hovered. It flew away very fast.

Dec. 11, 1950: l0 mi. NW of Gulcana, Alaska. 10:13 p.m. Northwest Air Lines flight 802 crew. Two white flashes, followed by a dark cloud which rose and split in two.

Jan. 8, 1951: South of Ft. Worth, Texas. 10:45 p.m. Mr. and Mrs. W.J. Boggus, plus unidentified drivers and passengers in other cars stopped to watch. Two groups of red and green lights in triangular formations were stationary and then moved.

Jan. 12, 1951: Ft. Benning, Georgia. 10 p.m. US Army 2Lt. A.C. Hale. One light with a fan-shaped wake remained motionless like a star about 20 minutes and then sped away.

Jan 16, 1951: Artesia, New Mexico. Time unknown. Two members of a balloon project from the General Mills. Aeronautical Research Laboratory, the manager of the Artesia Airport, and three pilots. The balloon crew was observing their 110' balloon at an altitude of 112,000' when a dull white, round object was spotted. It appeared larger than the balloon, but made no movement. Later, the balloon crew and the others saw two objects from the airport that were flying side-by-side. They circled the balloon and flew away to the northeast. The second observation lasted about 40 seconds.

Feb. 1, 1951: Johnson Air Base, Japan. 5:10 p.m. Pilot and radar operator of F-82 night fighter saw one amber light made three or four 360 degree turns to the right, reversed toward the F-82 and then climbed out of sight.

Feb. 21, 1951: Durban, South Africa. 4:55 a.m. Three men in a truck, several other persons, none of whom are named, saw a dark red, torpedo-shaped object with darker center, flew straight and level.

Feb. 26, 1951: Ladd AFB, Alaska. 7:10 a.m. USAF Sergeant J.B. Sells saw one dull grey, metallic object, estimated to be 120 feet long and 10-12 feet' thick, hovered, puffed smoke and sped away after about a minute.

Mar. 10, 1951: Chinnampo, Korea. 9:51 a.m. USAF B-29 bomber crew, including scanners and tail gunner. A large red-yellow glow burst and became blue-white. No further information in files.

Mar. 13, 1951: McClellan AFB, California. 3:20 p.m. USAF lLt B.J. Hastie, Mrs. Rafferty. A cylinder with twin tails, 200' long and 90' wide, turned north and flew at incredible speed.

Mar. 15, 1951: New Delhi, India. 10:20 a.m. 25 members of a flying club, including the chief aerial engineer and his two assistants. One metallic cigar-shaped object with white exhaust which turned black when it accelerated to an estimated 1,000 mph and made a large loop.

June 1, 1951: Niagara Falls, New York. 4:20 a.m. MSGT H.E. Sweeney, 2 enlisted men watched one glowing yellow-orange, saucer-shaped object with arc-shaped wings, flew straight up. Seen for 30-40 seconds.

July 24, 1951: Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Hanscom AFB Operations Officer Capt. Cobb, Cpl. Fein. One 100-200' tubular object, 5 times long as it was wide, with fins at one end, and colored greyish with many black spots. Flew 800-1,000 mph at 1-2,000 feet altitude, leaving a faint swath.

Aug. 25, 1951: Albuquerque, New Mexico. 9:58 p.m. Sandia Base Security Guard Hugh Young and wife. A flying wing-shaped craft passed over their heads at an estimated 800-1,000' altitude with no sound. Size estimated at one and a half times wingspan of B-36 bomber, or about 350 feet. Dark, chordwise stripes on underside, and 6-8 pairs of soft, glowing lights on trailing edge of "wing." Speed estimated at 300-400 mph, object seen for about 30 seconds.

Aug. 31, 1951: Matador, Texas. 12:45 p.m. Mrs. Tom Tilson, one or two other women. One pear-shaped object with a length of a B-29 fuselage (100'), aluminum or silver with a port or some type of aperture on the side. It moved with smaller end forward, drifting slowly at about 150' altitude, then headed up in a circular fashion and out of sight after a few seconds.

Sept. 6, 1951: Claremont, California. 7:20 p.m. SSGT W.T. Smith, MSGT L.L. Duel. Six orange lights in an irregular formation, flew straight and level into a coastal fog bank after 3-4 minutes.

Sept. 14, 1951: Goose Bay, Labrador, Canada. 9:30 p.m. TSGT W.B. Maupin, Cpl. J.W. Green saw three objects tracked on radar. Two were on a collision course, then one evaded to the right upon the request, by radio, of one of the radar operators. No aircraft were known to be in the area. A third unidentified track then joined the first two. The sighting lasted more than 15 minutes.

Oct. 2, 1951: Columbus, Ohio. 6 p.m. Battelle Memorial Institute graduate physicist Howard Cross. One bright oval with a clipped tail flew straight and level, fading into the distance after 1 minute.

Oct. 3, 1951: Kadena, Okinawa. 10:27 p.m. Radar operators Sgt. M.W. Watson and Pvt. Gonzales and one other Sergeant. One large, sausage-shaped blip tracked at an estimated 4,800 mph.

Oct. 9, 1951: Terre Haute, Indiana. 1:42 p.m. CAA Chief Aircraft Communicator Roy Messmore at Hulman Municipal Airport. One round silver object flew directly overhead, reaching the horizon in 15 seconds.

Oct. 9, 1951 Paris, Illinois. 1:45 Similar to event at Terre Haute (15 miles SE). It was originally listed as "unidentified" but was eventually reclassified.

Oct. 11, 1951: Minneapolis, Minnesota. 6:30 a.m. General Mills balloon researchers, including aeronautical engineer J.J. Kaliszewski, aerologist C.B. Moore (his second unidentified UFO report), pilot Dick Reilly in the air, and Doug Smith on the ground. The flight crew saw the first object, a brightly glowing one with a dark underside and a halo around it. The object arrived high and fast, then slowed and made slow climbing circles for about two minutes, and finally sped away to the east. Soon they saw another one, confirmed by ground observers using a theodolite, which sped across the sky. Total time first object was seen was 5 minutes, second was a few seconds.

Nov. 18, 1951: Washington, D.C. 3:20 a.m. Crew of Capital Airlines DC-4 Fliqht 610, Andrews AFB Senior air traffic controller Tom Selby. One object with several lights, followed the DC-4 for about 20 minutes and then turned back.

Nov. 24, 1951: Mankato, Minnesota. 3:53 p.m. USAF or ANG pilots W.H. Fairbrother and D.E. Stewart in F-51 Mustangs. One milky white object shaped like Northrop flying wing. Estimated 8 feet wing span. Flew straight and level for 5 seconds.

Dec. 7, 1951: Sunbury, Ohio. 4:30 p.m. Amateur astronomer Carl Loar. One silvery sphere seen through telescope. Two specks sighted at sides, object seemed to explode and was replaced by a dark cloud and many specks.

Dec. 7, 1951: Oak Ridge, Tennessee. 8:15 a.m. Atomic Energy Commission guard J.H. Collins. One 20' square object, white-grey but not shiny flew above ridge to clouds and back again twice.

Jan. 16, 1952: Artesia, New Mexico. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

Feb. 11, 1952: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

Feb 23, 1952: Sinuiji, North Korea. Witnesses saw a cylindrical shaped bluish object that disappeared by fading out.

March 20, 1952: Queen Annes City, Maryland. Orange-yellow light in horizontal flight that made two vertical jumps.

March 23, 1952: Yakima, Washington. Radar sighting of object and a jet fighter was scarmbled for an intercept. Ground radars also picked up the object.

March 24, 1952: Point Conception, California. Radar observation made by Hancock.

March 29, 1952: Misawa, AFB, Japan. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

March 5, 1952: Duncanville, Texas. Object observed by radar maintenance mechanic.

April 5, 1952: Miami, Florida. The witness observed four objects pass the full moon. One object was more plainly seen, was about half the moon's diameter and had a sharply defined leading edge.

April 6, 1952: Temple, Texas. 2:59 p.m. Disc shaped objects in a circular formation.

April 12, 1952: North Bay, Ontario. 11:30 p.m. A round, amber colored object came in from the south. It flew at twice the speed of a F-86 at low level. It stopped and reversed direction.

April 14, 1952: Memphis, Tennessee. 6:30 p.m. Witness saw an inverted bowl with vertical slots. It flew straight and level and had red glowing exhaust.

April 14, 1952: La Crosse, Wisconsin. 12:35 p.m. Witnesses watched objects traveling in straight and level flight change position in a V-formation.

April 15, 1952: Santa Cruz, California. 7:40 p.m. Two circular objects were seen in straight and level flight. Project card noted that the witness, Hays, appeared to be reliable.

April 17, 1952: Longmeadow, Massachusetts. 8:30 p.m. The object is described as star colored and star shaped. It made erratic movements including rapid climbs and dives. Although this sounds suspiciously like a very bright star, the Project Blue Book files carries it as an unidentified.

April 17 - 18, 1952: Yuma Test Station, Arizona. A white, circular object flew across the sky leaving a white vapor trail behind it.

April 18, 1952: Bethesda, Maryland. 1:30 a.m. Witness sighted orange-yellow lights in a V-formation that flew straight and level.

April 18, 1952: Corner Brook, Newfoundland. 10:10 p.m. The witness saw a round, yellowish gold object that seemed to disappear and then

come back. What is interesting is that the witness had published an article the day before debunking UFOs.

April 18, 1952: Japan. Object was seen on radar.

April 22, 1952: Okinawa. The crew of a B-29 reported they saw three elliptical shaped object about two to three feet long maneuvering erratically.

April 24, 1952: Bellevue Hill, Vermont. 5:00 a.m. The crew of a C-124 saw three circular objects, bluish in color, as they flew in straight and level flight.

April 24, 1952: Milton, Massachusetts. 2:30 p.m. Witness named Burn saw two dark red objects of a "flat square shape" traveled in "wobbly" flight, climbed, leveled out and then climbed again.

April 24, 1952: Clovis, New Mexico. 8:10 p.m. An Air Force flight surgeon saw many orange-amber lights flying in a formation described as a "blob."

April 27, 1952: Roseville, Michigan. 4:14 p.m. A number of civilians saw four oval and cigar-shaped objects that turned over and changed shape as they flew and performed a variety of maneuvers.

April 27, 1952: Yuma, Arizona. 8:30 p.m. An Air Force Staff Sergeant and his wife saw a bright red, disc-shaped object as it came and went. It made a rapid climb. They may have seen one object eight times or eight objects one time.

April 29, 1952: Marshall, Texas. 3:30 p.m. Witness saw a round, white object in straight and level flight.

April 29, 1952: Near Goodland, Kansas. 10:00 p.m. Witness reported a fan-shaped object, white, in straight and level flight.

May 1, 1952: Moses Lake, Washington. An AEC employee watched a silver object in straight and level flight.

May 1, 1952: George AFB, California. 5:50 p.m. Several Air Force officers and enlisted men watched five, flat white, disc-shaped objects make a sudden 90 degree turn and disappear.

May 5, 1952: Tenafly, New Jersey. Witnessed by Judson. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

May 7, 1952: Kessler AFB, Mississippi. 12:15 p.m. Four Air Force personnel saw about ten objects that were cylindrically shaped and looked to be made of aluminum dart in and out of the clouds.

May 9, 1952: George AFB, California. 10:30 a.m. Witnesses on the ground and pilot of an F-86 saw one silver colored, round object that disappeared to the north. One of a series of sightings at the base on May 9, 11, 13, 14, 20. Some were identified and many were marked as insufficient data.

May 10, 1952: Ellenton, South Carolina. 11:45 p.m. A number of civilians watched four object, yellow in color and disc shapes, that few straight and level for a short period. One object was reported to have pulled up to avoid other objects on the ground.

May 14, 1952: Puerto Rico. 7:00 p.m. An attorney, among others, reported two objects, orange in color, spherical, one of which darted around.

May 20, 1952: Houston, Texas. 10:10 p.m. Three Air Force navigators watched an orange-white light coming toward them. Object flew straight except for one turn.

May 25, 1952: Walnut Lake, Michigan. 11:15 p.m. Seven civilians including a witness named Hoffman, reported a white to yellow orange moon-shaped object, which they followed in a car for thirty minutes.

May 28, 1952: Saigon, RVN. 10:30 a.m. A civilian reported a single, white-silver disc-shaped object that was in sight for two minutes.

May 28, 1952: Albuquerque, New Mexico. 1:30 p.m. A city fireman reported two sightings of a light silver and light brown, circular objects that came in from the northeast at high speed, stopped to circle and then climbed out of sight.

May 29, 1952: San Antonio, Texas. 7:00 p.m. An Air Force pilot watched a single object that he described as tubular for about eight minutes.

June 1, 1952: Rapid City, South Dakota. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 1, 1952: Walla Walla, Washington. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 2, 1952: Bayview, Washington. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 5, 1952: Lubbock, Texas. Witnessed by Bacon. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 5, 1952: Albuquerque, New Mexico. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 5, 1952: Offutt AFB, Nebraska. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 6, 1952: Kimpo AFB, Japan. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files. It was also noted in the Master Index that the case file was missing.

June 7, 1952: Albuquerque, New Mexico. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 8, 1952: Albuquerque, New Mexico. Witnessed by Markland. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 9, 1952: Minneapolis, Minneasota. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files. It is also noted in the Master Index that the case file was missing.

June 12, 1952: Fort Smith, Arkansas. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 12, 1952: Marrakech, Morrocco. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 13, 1952: Middletown, Pennsylvania. Witnessed by Thomas. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 15, 1952: Louisville, Kentucky. Witnessed by Duke. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 16, 1952: Walker AFB, Roswell, New Mexico. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 17, 1952: McChord AFB, Washington. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 17, 1952: Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 18, 1952: Columbus, Wisconsin. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 18, 1952: Pontiac, Michigan. Witnessed by Hoffman. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 19, 1952: Goose AFB, Labrador. Labeled as a radar case. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 19, 1952: Yuma, Arizona. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 20, 1952: Korea. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 21, 1952: Kelly AFB, Texas. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 22, 1952. Korea. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 23, 1952. Spokane, Washington. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 23, 1952: McChord AFB, Washington. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 23, 1952: Kirksville, Missouri. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files. It is also noted in the Master Index that the case file is missing.

June 23, 1952: Oakridge, Tennessee. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 23, 1952: New Owensboro, Tennessee. A contractor named Depp heard a sound like aircraft and looked up to see two round objects, described as looking like soap bubbles, flying one behind the other. They disappeared in about five seconds.

June 25, 1952: Tokyo, Japan. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 25, 1952: Chicago, Illinois. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 25, 1952. Japan, Korea area. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 26, 1952. Terre Haute, Indiana. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 26, 1952: Pottstown, Pennsylvania. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 27, 1952: Topeka, Kansas. Military witnesses. Pilot saw one object that hovered and pulsated. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 28, 1952: Lake Kishkonoug, Wisconsin. One silver white sphere was observed over the lake. The object made a 180 degree turn and became elliptical turning the turn and then a sphere.

June 28, 1952: Nagoya, Honshu, Japan. Military witnesses saw a single, blue object that was elliptical. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

June 29, 1952: O'Hare Airport, Chicago, Illinois. Witnesses saw one oval object which was very bright and smooth like highly polished silver. After a time, object moved at a high rate of speed and disappeared like a light bulb being shut off.

July 3, 1952: Selfridge AFB, Michigan. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

July 3, 1952: Chicago, Illinois. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

July 5, 1952: Norman, Oklahoma. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

July 6-12, 1952: Governors Island, New York. Amateur photographer Neff was making time exposures didn't see the object until the film was developed.

July 9, 1952: Colorado Springs, Colorado. Witnessed by military personnel. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

July 12, 1952: Annapolis, Maryland. Witnessed by Washburn. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

July 13, 1952: Kirksville, Missouri. Object seen on military radar and case file accompanied by scope photographs. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

July 14, 1952: Norfolk, Virginia. Witnessed by Nash. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

July 18, 1952: Miami, Florida. Witnessed by Raymer. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

July 20, 1952: Lavalette, New Jersey. Witnessed by Spoomer. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

July 21, 1952: Holyoak, Massachusetts. Witnessed by Burgess. Carried as an unidentified in the Project Blue Book files.

July 22, 1952: between Boston and Provincetown, Massachusetts. 10:47 p.m. Pilot and radar operator of USAF F-94 jet interceptor. One round blue light passed F-94, spinning.

July 22, 1952: Trenton, New Jersey. 10:50 p.m. to 12:45 a.m., July 23. Crews of several USAF F-94 jet interceptors from Dover AFB, Del. Thirteen visual sightings and one radar tracking of blue-white lights during two hours.

July 23, 1952: Pottstown, Pennsylvania. 8:40 a.m. The two-man crews of three USAF F-94 jet interceptors saw ae large silver object,

shaped like a long pear with two or three squares beneath it, flew at 150-180 kts, while a smaller object, delta-shaped or swept back, flew around it at 1,000 - 1,500 kts.

July 23, 1952: Altoona, Pennsylvania. 12:50 p.m. Two-man crews of two USAF F-94 jet interceptors at 35-46,000' altitude. Three cylindrical objects in a vertical stack formation flew at an altitude of 50-80,000 feet.

July 23, 1952: South Bend, Indiana. 11:35 p.m. USAF pilot Capt. H. W. Kloth. Two bright blue-white objects flew together, then the rear one veered off after about 9 minutes.

July 24, 1952: Carson Sink, Nevada. 3:40 p.m. Two USAF LTCs McGinn and Barton in a B-25 bomber watched three silver, delta-shaped objects, each with a ridge along the top, crossed in front of and above the B-25 at high speed, in 3-4 seconds.

July 26, 1952: Washington, D.C. 8 p.m. until after midnight. Radar operators at several airports, airline pilots. Many unidentified blips tracked by radar all over Washington area, at varying speeds. Pilots spotted unidentified lights.

July 26, 1952: Kansas City, Missouri. 12:15 a.m. USAF Capt. H. A. Stone, men in control towers at Fairfax Field and Municipal Airport. One greenish light with red-orange flashes was seen for 1 hour as it descended in the northwest from 40* elevation to 10* elevation.

July 26, 1952: Andrews AFB, Maryland. This was a continuation of the extensive sightings and radar tracking reports reported throughout the Washington, D.C. area, all night long.

July 26, 1952: Kirtland AFB, New Mexico. 12:05 a.m. Airman lst Class J.M. Donaldson. Eight to ten orange balls in a triangular or V-formation flew very fast for 3-4 seconds.

July 26, 1952: Williams, California. Case missing from official files.

July 27, 1952: Selfridge AFB, Michigan. 10:05 a.m. Three B-29 bomber crewmen on ground. Many round, white objects flew straight and level, very fast. Two at 10:05, one at 10:10, one at 10:15, one at 10:20. Each was seen for about 30 seconds.

July 27, 1952: Wichita Falls, Texas. 8:30 p.m. Mr. and Mrs. Adrian Ellis. Two disc-shaped objects, illuminated by a phosphorus light, flew at an estimated l,000 mph for 15 seconds.

July 28, 1952: Heidelberg, West Germany. 10:20 p.m. Sgt. B.C. Grassmoen, WAC PFC. A.P. Turner. One saucer-shaped object having

an appearance of light metal and giving off shafts of white light, flew slow, made a 90^ turn and climbed away fast after 4-5 minutes.

July 28, 1952: McGuire AFB, New Jersey. 6 a.m. Ground Control Approach radar operator MSGT W.F. Dees, and persons in the base control tower tracked on radar a large cluster of very distinct blips. The visual observation was of oblong objects having neither wings nor tail, which made a very fast turn and at one time were in echelon formation.

July 28, 1952: McChord AFB, Washington. 2:15 a.m. TSGT Walstead, SSGT Calkins of the 635th AC&W Squadron saw a dull, glowing, blue-green ball the size of a dime at arms' length, flew very fast, straight and level.

July 29, 1952: Osceola, Wisconsin. 1:30 a.m. Radar operators on ground, pilot of F-5l Mustang in flight saw several clusters of up to 10 small radar targets and one large target. Small targets moved from southwest to east at 50-60 kts. following each other. The large one moved at 600 kts. Pilot confirmed one target.

July 29, 1952: Langley AFB, Virginia. 2:30 p.m. USAF Capt. D.G. Moore, of military air traffic control system. One undescribed object flew at an estimated 2,600 m.p.h., below 5,000' altitude, toward the air base for about 2 minutes.

July 29, 1952: Langley AFB, Virginia. 2:50 p.m. Mr. Moore, Gilfillan electronics representative W. Yhope. One radar target tracked moving away, stopped for 2 minutes, again moved very, very fast.

July 29, 1952; Merced, California. 3:44 or 4:35 p.m. Herbert Mitchell and one employee. One dark, discus-shaped object, trailed by a silvery light 2 lengths behind, tipped on its side, dove, hesitated and then circled very fast during the 2 minute sighting.

July 29, 1952: Wichita, Kansas. 12:35 p.m. USAF shop employees Douglas and Hess at Municipal Airport. One bright white circular object with a flat bottom flew very fast, and then hovered 10-15 seconds over the Cessna Aircraft Co. plant, during the 5 minute sighting.

July 29, 1952: Ennis, Montana. 12:30 p.m. USAF persons, alerted that UFOs were coming from the direction of Seattle, Wash did see two to five flat disc-shaped objects one of which hovered for 3-4 minutes, while the others circled it.

July 30, 1952: Albuquerque, New Mexico. 11:02 p.m. USAF lst Lt. George Funk saw an orange light remained stationary for 10 minutes.

July 30, 1952: San Antonio, Texas. 10 a.m. E.E. Nye and one other person watched as one round, white object flew slow and then sped away after 20-30 minutes.

Aug.1, 1952: Lancaster, California. 1:14 a.m. Sheriff's deputies and other persons, one named Mallette saw two brilliant red lights hovered and maneuvered for 5 minutes.

Aug. 2, 1952: Lake Charles, Louisiana. 3 a.m. USAF lLT W.A. Theil, one enlisted man. One red ball with a blue flame tail flew straight and level for 3-4 seconds.

Aug. 4, 1952: Phoenix, Arizona. 2:20 a.m. USAF A3C W.F. Vain. One yellow ball which lengthened and narrowed to plate shape, flew straight and level for 5 minutes.

Aug. 4, 1952: Mt. Vernon, New York. 11:37 a.m. One woman, two children. One object, shaped like a lifesaver or donut, emitted black smoke from its top and made a 15' arc in 1.5 minutes.

Aug 5. 1952: Haneda AFB, Japan. 11:30 p.m. USAF F-94 jet interceptor pilots lLT W.R. Holder and lLT A.M. Jones, and Haneda control tower operators. Airborne radar tracked a target for 90 seconds. Control tower operators watched 50-60 minutes while a dark shape with a light flew as fast as 330 kts. (380 mph), hovered, flew curves and performed a variety of maneuvers.

Aug. 6, 1952: Tokyo, Japan. This is a continuation of the Haneda AFB sightings.

Aug. 6, 1952: Port Austin, Michigan. Case missing from official files.

Aug. 7. 1952: San Antonio, Texas. 9:08 a.m. Mrs. Susan Pfuhl. Four glowing white discs: one made a 180* turn, one flew straight and level, one veered off, and one circled during the 70 minute sighting.

Aug. 9, 1952: Lake Charles, Louisiana. 10:50 a.m. USAF A3C J.P. Raley. One disc-shaped object flew very fast and then hovered for 2 seconds during a 5-6 minute sighting.

Aug. 13, 1952: Tokyo, Japan. 9:45 p.m. USAF Marine Corps pilot Maj. D. McGough. One orange light flew a left orbit at 8,000' and 230 m.p.h., spiraled down to no more than 1,500', remained stationary for 2-3 minutes and went out. An attempted interception was unsuccessful.

Aug. 18, 1952: Fairfield, California. 12:50 a.m. Three policemen watched one object changed color like a diamond, and changed directions during the 30 minute sighting.

Aug. 19, 1952: Red Bluff, California. 2:38 p.m. Ground Observer Corps observer Albert Lathrop saw two objects, shaped like fat bullets, flew straight and level, very fast for 25 seconds.

August 19, 1952: West Palm Beach, Florida. 9:30 p.m. Scoutmaster Sonny Desvergers claimed to have seen a flying saucer up close. It launched a red mist that burned him slightly. Air Force conclusion: The best hoax in UFO history.

Aug. 20, 1952: Neffesville, Pennsylvania. 3:10 a.m. Bill Ford and two others saw an undescribed object flew at 500' altitude for several minutes.

Aug. 21, 1952: Dallas, Texas. 11:54 p.m. Jack Rossen, ex-artillery observer saw three blue-white lights hovered then descended and then, 1 and a half minutes later, one of them descended more.

Aug. 23, 1952: Akron, Ohio. 4:10 a.m. USAF 2nd Lt. H.K. Funseth, a ground radar observer, and two U.S. Navy men saw a single pulsing amber light was seen to fly straight and level for 7 minutes.

Aug. 24, 1952: Hermanas, Mexico. 10:15 a.m. Georgia Air National Guard F-84G jet fighter pilot Col. G.W. Johnson saw two 6' silver balls in abreast formation, one turned grey rapidly, the other slowly. One changed to long grey shape during a turn. Sighting lasted about 10 minutes.

Aug. 24, 1952: Tucson, Arizona. 5:40 p.m. Mr. and Mrs. George White watched one large round, metallic, white light with a vague lower surface, flew slowly, then fast with a dancing, wavering motion, for about 1 minute.

Aug. 24, 1952: Levelland, Texas. 9:30 p.m., 10:30 p.m. Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Sharp saw a single object, shaped like a spinning top, changing color from red to yellow to blue, and with a fiery tail, hovered for 20 minutes, whistling, then flew away. It, or another like it, returned an hour later.

Aug. 25, 1952: Pittsburg, Kansas. 5:35 a.m. Radio station musician William Squyres saw a single dull aluminum object, shaped like two meat platters, face to face, estimated at 75 feet long, 45 feet wide, and 15 feet thick. Through a window in the front section shone a blue light; the head and shoulders of a man could be seen. The mid-section had numerous windows through which could be seen some kind of regular movement. A series of small propellers were spaced close together along the outer

edge of the object, revolving at high speed. The object was hovering about 10' above the ground, 100 yards off the road, with a slight rocking motion. It then ascended vertically with a sound like a large covey of quail starting to fly at the same time. Vegetation showed signs of having been disturbed under the object.

Aug. 25, 1952: Holloman AFB, New Mexico. 3:40 p.m. Civilian supervisor Fred Lee, foreman L.A. Aquilar watched a single round silver object flew south, turned and flew north, made a 360 turn and flew away vertically after 3-5 minutes.

Aug. 26, 1952: Lathrop Wells, Nevada. 12:10 a.m. USAF Capt. D.A. Woods. One large, round, very bright object with a V-shaped contrail having a dark cone in the center, flew very fast, hovered, made an instantaneous 90 turn, followed by a gentle climb and finally sudden acceleration.

Aug. 28, 1952: Chickasaw and Brookley AFB, Alabama. 9:30 p.m. USAF control tower operators, officer from USAF Office of Special Investigations, and others. Six objects, varying from fiery red to sparkling diamond appearance, hovered, flew erratically up and down for 1 hour and l5minutes.

Aug. 29, 1952: Colorado Springs, Colorado. 8:35 p.m. Pilot C.A. Magruder. Three objects, 50' in diameter, 10' high, aluminum with red-yellow exhaust, flew in trail at estimated 1,500 mph for 4-5 seconds.

Aug. 29, 1952: west of Thule, Greenland. 10:50 a.m. Two U.S. Navy pilots flying a P4Y-2 patrol plane. Three white disc-shaped or spherical objects hovered, then flew very fast in a triangular formation, in 2-3 minutes.

Sept. l, 1952: Marietta, Georgia. 10:50 p.m. Ex-Air Force B-25 gunner. Two large white disc-shaped objects with green vapor trails flew in trail formation, merged, flew away very fast.

Sept. 1, 1952: Marietta, Georgia. 10:30 p.m. One unidentified person using binoculars. Two large objects shaped like spinning tops and displaying red, blue and green colors, flew side by side, leaving a sparkling trail for 30 minutes.

Sept. 1, 1952: Atlanta, Georgia. 9:43 p.m. Mrs. William Davis and nine other persons. One light, similar to the evening star, moved up and down for a long period of time.

Sept. l, 1952: Marietta, Georgia. 10:30 p.m. Mr. Bowman (ex-artillery officer) and 24 others. A red, white, and blue-green object which spun and shot off sparks for 15 minutes.

Sept. 1, 1952: Yaak, Montana. 4:45 a.m. Visual sighting by two USAF enlisted men, radar tracking seen by three men using AN/FPS-3 radar set. Two small, varicolored lights became black silhouettes at dawn; flew erratically.

Sept. 2, 1952: Chicago, Illinois. 3 a.m. Radar tracker Turason (ground controlled approach) at Midway Airport. Forty targets flew in miscellaneous directions, up to 175 mph. Two seemed to fly in formation with DC-6 airliner.

Sept. 3, 1952: Tucson, Arizona. 9 a.m. Civilian pilots McCraven and Thomas. One shiny, dark ellipse made three broad, curving sweeps in 1.5 minutes.

Sept. 6, 1952: Lake Charles AFB, Louisiana. l:3O a.m. TSGT J.E. Wilson and two enlisted men. One bright star-like light moved about the sky for 2 hours.

Sept. 6, 1952: Tucson, Arizona. 4:55 p.m. Ex-Congresswoman Mrs. Isabella King and Bill McClain. One orange teardrop-shaped object whirled on its vertical axis, descended very fast, stopped, retraced its path upwards, while whirling in the opposite direction.

Sept. 7, 1952: San Antonio, Texas. 10:30 p.m. Chemist J.W. Gibson and others. One orange object or light (the color of 2,000 feet) exploded into view. Seen for from 3-20 seconds by various observers.

Sept. 9, 1952: Rabat, French Morocco. 9 p.m. E.J. Colisimo, a civilian illustrator with USAF Intelligence. One disc with lights along part of its circumference, flew twice as fast as a T-33 jet trainer, in a slightly curved path for 5 seconds.

Sept. 12, 1952: Allen, Maryland. 9:30 p.m. Mr. and Mrs. David Kolb, of the Ground Observer Corps, using binoculars. One white light with a red trim and streamers flew northeast for 35 minutes.

Sept. 13, 1952: Allentown, Pennsylvania. 7:40 p.m. Private pilot W.A. Hobler, flying a Beech Bonanza. One object, shaped like a fat football, flaming orange-red color, descended and then pulled up in front of the witness' airplane.

Sept. 14, 1952: Santa Barbara, California. 8:40 p.m. USAF C-54 transport pilot Tarbutton. One blue-white light travelled straight and level,

then went up. Seen for 30 seconds.

Sept. 14, 1952: North Atlantic, between Ireland and Greenland. Military persons from several countries aboard ships in the NATO "Operation Mainbrace" exercise. Among the sightings: one blue-green triangle was observed flying 1,500 mph; three objects in a triangular formation gave off white light exhaust at 1,500 mph.

Sept. 14, 1952: White Lake, South Dakota. 7 p.m. Ground Observer Corps observer L.W. Barnes, using binoculars. One red, cigar-shaped object, with three puffs behind it, flew west, then south, and then was gone. Seen 30-40 minutes.

Sept. 14, 1952: Ciudad Jaurez, Mexico. 11:30 p.m. to 1:20 a.m. Sept. 15. Consulting engineer R. J. Portis and three others. Six groups of 12-15 luminous spheres or discs, which flew in formations varying from arcs to inverted-Y's, very fast.

Sept. 14, 1952: Olmstead AFB, Pennsylvania. Time not known. Witness: pilot of Flying Tiger Airlines airplane N67977. One blue light flew very fast on a collision course with the airliner.

Sept. 16, 1952: Portland, Maine. 6:22 p.m. Crew of U.S. Navy P2V Neptune patrol plane, visually and via radar. A group of five lights was seen at the same time a long, thin blip was being tracked on radar. The sighting involved 20 minutes.

Sept. 16, 1952: Warner-Robbins AFB, Georgia. 7:30 p.m. Three USAF officers, two civilians. Two white lights flew abreast, at 100 mph, for 15 minutes.

Sept. 17, 1952: Tucson, Arizona. 11:40 a.m. Mr. and Mrs. Ted Hollingsworth. Two groups of three large, flat, shiny objects flew in tight formations the first group slow, the second faster. Seen for 2 minutes.

Sept. 23, 1952: Gander Lake, Newfoundland, Canada. Pepperell AFB operations officer and seven other campers. One bright white light, which reflected on the lake, flew straight and level at 100 mph for 10 minutes.

Sept. 24, 1952: Charleston, West Virginia. 3:30 p.m. Crew of USAF B-29 bomber. A lot of bright, metallic particles or flashes, up to 3 feet in length, streamed past the B-29 for 15 minutes.

Sept. 26, 1952: 400 miles NNW of Azores Islands. 11:16 p.m. Pilot, copilot, engineer and aircraft commander of USAF C-124 transport plane saw two distinct green lights were seen to the right and slightly above the C-124, and at one time seemed to turn toward it. The lights alternated leading each other during more than 1 hour of observation.

Sept. 27, 1952: Inyokern, California. 10 p.m. Two couples, using a 5x telescope watched a single large, round object, which went through the color spectrum every 2 seconds, was seen to fly straight and level for 15 minutes.

Sept. 29, 1952: Rochester, England. 3:55 p.m. Report came via the Rochester Police Dept. Two flat objects hovered for 3 minutes, and then sped away.

Sept. 29, 1952: Southern Pines, North Carolina. 8:15 p.m. US Army Reserve lLT C.H. Stevens and two others. One green ellipse with a long tail orbited for 15 minutes.

Sept. 29, 1952: Aurora, Colorado. 3:15 p.m. USAF TSGT B.R. Hughes saw five or six circular objects, bright white but not shiny, circled in trail formation for 5-6 minutes.

Oct. 1, 1952: Shaw AFB, South Carolina. 6:57 p.m. USAF lLT T.J. Pointek, pilot of RF-8O reconnaissance jet. One bright white light flew straight, then vertical, then hovered, and then made an abrupt turn during a 23 minute attempted intercept.

Oct. 1, 1952: Pascagoula, Mississippi. 7:40 p.m. Mr. and Mrs. C.C. McLean and one other person. One round, milky-white object, shaped like a powder puff, hovered for 5-10 minutes then flew away very fast in an arc. A loud blast was heard at the start of the 22 minute sighting.

Oct. 7, 1952: Alamagordo, New Mexico. 8:30 p.m. USAF LT Bagnell. One pale blue oval, with its long axis vertical, flew straight and level for 4-5 seconds, covering 30 in that time.

Oct. 10, 1952: Otis AFB, Massachusetts. 6:30 p.m. USAF SSGT, two other enlisted men. One blinking white light moved like a pendulum for 20 minutes, and then shot straight up.

Oct. 17, 1952: Taos, New Mexico. 9:15 p.m. Four USAF officers One round, bright blue light moved from north to northeast at an elevation of 45 degrees for 2-3 seconds and then burned out.

Oct. 17, 1952: Killeen, Texas. 10:15 p.m. Ministers Greenwalt and Kluck. Ten lights, or a rectangle of lights, moved more or less straight and level for 5 seconds.

Oct. 17, 1952: Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico. 11 p.m. One military person (no detail). One white streamer moved at an estimated 3,000 mph in an arc for 20 seconds.

Oct. 19, 1952: San Antonio, Texas. 1:30 p.m. One ex-USAF aircrewman Woolsey. Three circular aluminum objects, one of which was olive-drab colored on the side, flew in a rough V-formation. One object flipped slowly, another object stopped, during the 3-4 minute sighting.

Oct. 19. 1952: 500 miles south of Hawaii. 6:58 p.m. Crew of USAF C-50 transport plane. One round yellow light, with a red glowing edge, estimated at 100' in diameter, flew at 300-400 kts.

Oct. 21, 1952: Knoxville, Tennessee. Persons at airport weather station. Six white lights flew in a loose formation for 1-2 minutes, and made a shallow dive at a weather balloon.

Oct. 24, 1952: Elberton, Alabama. 8:26 p.m. USAF LT Rau, Capt. Marcinko, flying a Beech T-ll trainer. One object, shaped like a plate, with a brilliant front and vague trail, flew with its concave surface forward for 5 seconds.

Oct. 29, 1952: Erding Air Depot, West Germany. 7:50 a.m. USAF SSGT Anderson, A2C Max Handy. One round object, silhouetted against a cloud, flew straight and level and smooth at 400 mph for 20 seconds.

Oct. 31, 1952: Fayetteville, Georgia. 7:40 p.m. USAF LT James Allen. One orange, blimp-shaped object, 80' long and 20' high, flew at treetop level, crossed over Allen's car (at which time his radio stopped playing), then climbed out at 45' and tremendous speed at the end of a 1minute sighting.

Nov. 3, 1952: Laredo AFB, Texas. 6:29 p.m. Two control tower operators, including Lemaster. One long, elliptical, white-grey light flew very fast, paused, and then increased speed during a 3-4 second observation.

Nov. 4, 1952: Vineland, New Jersey. 5:40 p.m. Housewife Mrs. Sprague. Two groups of 2-3 whirling discs of light flew toward the southeast over a period of 30 seconds.

Nov. 12, 1952: Los Alamos, New Mexico. 10:23 p.m. Security inspector. Four red-white-green lights flew slowly over a prohibited area for 15 minutes.

Nov. 13, 1952: Opheim, Montana. 2:20 a.m. Radar tracking by USAF 779th AC&W station. An unexplained track was followed for 1 hour, 28 minutes, at 158,000' altitude (30 miles) and a speed of 240 mph.

Nov. 13, 1952: Glasgow, Montana. 2:43 a.m. U.S. Weather Bureau observer Earl Oksendahl. Five oval-shaped objects, with lights all around them, flew in a V-formation for about 20 seconds. Each object seemed to

be changing position vertically by climbing or diving as if to hold formation. Formation came from the northwest, made a 90* overhead, and flew away to the southwest.

Nov. 15, 1952: Wichita, Kansas. 7:02 a.m. USAF Major R.L. Wallander, Capt. Belleman, A3C Phipps. One orange object varied in shape, as it made jerky upward sweeps with 10-15 second pauses during a 3-5 minute sighting.

Nov. 24, 1952: Annandale, Virginia. 6:30 p.m. L.L. Brettner. One round, glowing object flew very fast, made right angle turns and reversed course during a 1 hour sighting.

Nov. 27, 1952: Albuquerque, New Mexico. 12:10 p.m. Pilot and crew chief of UAAF B-26 bomber. A series of black smoke bursts (4-3-3-4-3), similar to antiaircraft fire, was seen over a 20 minute period.

Nov. 30, 1952: Washington, D.C. I operator at Washington National Airport. Radar tracking's similar to those of July 26, 1952.

Dec. 8, 1952: Ladd AFB, Alaska. 8:16 p.m. Pilot lLT D. Dickman and radar operator lLT T. Davies in USAF F-94 jet interceptor (s/n 49-2522). One white, oval light which changed to red at higher altitude, flew straight and level for 2 minutes, then climbed at phenomenal speed on an erratic flight path. Sighting lasted 10 minutes.

Dec. 9, 1952: Madison, Wisconsin. 5:45 p.m. Capt. Bridges and lLT Johneon in USAF T-33 jet trainer saw four bright lights, in diamond formation, flew at 400 m.p.h. and were passed by the T-33 at 450 mph during the 10 minute sighting.

Dec. 28, 1952: Marysville, California. Case missing from official files.

Jan. 1, 1953: Craig, Montana. 8:45 p.m. Warner Anderson and two women saw a single silver, saucer-shaped object with a red glowing bottom, flew low over a river and then climbed fast in a horizontal attitude.

Jan. 8, 1953: Larson AFB, Washington. 7:15 a.m. Men from the 82nd Fighter-Interceptor Squadron, including the squadron commander, none of whom were airborne, watched a single green, disc-shaped or round object flew southwest for 15 minutes, with a vertically bobbing motion and sideways movements, below clouds.

Jan. 10, 1953: Sonoma, California. 3:45 p.m. or 4 p.m. Retired Col. Robert McNab, and Mr. Hunter of the Federal Security Agency saw a single flat object, like a pinhead, made three 360* right turns in 9

seconds, made abrupt 90* turns to the right and left, stopped, accelerated to original speed and finally flew out of sight vertically after 60-75 seconds.

Jan. 17, 1953: near Guatemala City, Guatemala. 3:55 p.m. Geologist/salesman J.J. Sackett. One brilliant green-gold object, shaped like the Goodyear blimp with its length twice its height, flew 400 mph straight and level, stopped, then went straight up with one stop. Sighting lasted 22 seconds.

Jan. 28, 1953: Pt. Mugu, California. 1 p.m. R.W. Love, owner of Love Diving Co., engaged in retrieving radio-controlled drones. An 18-20' white, flat disc flew straight and level, overhead, for 6 minutes.

Jan. 28, 1953: Corona, California. 6:05 p.m. USAF TSGT George Beyer. Five 25' green spheres flew in V-formation, then changed to trail formation at which time the end objects turned red. Sighting lasted 12 minutes.

Jan. 28, 1953: Albany, Georgia. Radar maintenance personnel. Radar tracked one stationary target for 20 minutes. A visual sighting about the same time was explained.

Feb. 3, 1953: Keflavik, Iceland. 5:25 p.m. Radar operators tracked four unidentified targets for 24 minutes.

Feb. 4, 1953: Yuma, Arizona. 1:50 p.m. US Weather Bureau observer Stanley Brown, using a theodolite. One white, oblong object was tracked flying straight up, leveling off and being joined by a second, similar, object. The second twice flew away and returned to the first. After 5 minutes, both were lost to sight behind clouds.

Feb. 17, 1953: Port Austin. Michigan. 10:04 p.m. Two officers and three airmen of USAF AC&W squadron, visually and by radar. Visual object appeared to larger and brighter than a star and changed color; it was seen to move slowly for 5 minutes until 10:09 p.m. Radar picked up a target at 10:08 p.m. moving in a similar direction for 17 minutes, at similar speed.

Feb. 20, 1953: Pittsburg-Stockton, California. #1 time unknown; #2, 10:30 p.m. USAF B-25 bomber pilots. #1 was a bright yellow light seen for 8 minutes. #2 was a bright light which flew on a collision course, dimmed and climbed away fast.

Feb. 24, 1953: Sherman, Texas. 7:43 p.m. Warrant Officer and Mrs. Alden. Two bright red, round objects with big halos flew in small circles, climbed and faded during a 3-7 second sighting.

Feb. 27, 1953: Shreveport, Louisiana. 11:58 a.m. USAF airman/private pilot. Five yellow discs made circular turns, fluttered, three of them vanished, the other two flew erratic square turns for a total of 4 minutes.

March 11, 1953: Hackettstown, New Jersey. 4 a.m. Mrs. Nina Cook, an experienced private pilot and wife of a Pan Am flight engineer. A large light, blinking at 10-15 times per minute, moved up and down along a mountain range.

March 14, 1953: north of Hiroshima, Japan. 11:45 p.m. Radar and visual observation by 10 crew members of U.S. Navy P2V-5 patrol plane. Groups of 5-10 colored lights, totaling 90-100, slowly moved aft off the left side of the airplane, as detected visually and by airborne radar for 5 minutes.

March 21, 1953: Elmira, New York. 3:05 p.m. Ground Observer Corps observation post. Six discs in a group flew high and fast for a few seconds.

March 25, 1953: San Antonio, Texas. 3:05 p.m. USAF Captain and Mrs. D.E. Cox. Several lights, some of which moved straight, others which made 360^ turns for 1.5 hours.

March 27, 1953: Mt. Taylor, New Mexico. 7:25 p.m. Pilot of USAF F-86 jet fighter at 600 kts. One bright orange circle flew at 800 kts and executed three fast rolls. Pilot chased object for 4 minutes.

March 29, 1953: Spooner, Wisconsin. 3:45 p.m. L.C. Gillette. One aluminum, circular object flew high and fast, twice reversing its course.

April 30, 1955: Travis County, Texas. Military witness watched four black objects about the size of a pencil eraser held at arm's length flying in a cluster, disappearing to the west.

May 4, 1955: Keflavik Airport, Iceland. Military witnesses watched ten round objects, looking like oxidized silver, that flew in the general area but were in no formation. They flew in very erratic patterns.

May 23, 1955: Cheyenne, Wyoming. Midnight. Military witnesses watched four objects in a formation side by side.

July 29, 1955: Columbus, Nebraska. Witness saw five objects, four of which were orange and one white, appeared as flashing lights.

Aug 11, 1955: Iceland. Witnesses watched about a dozen objects that seemed to change shape from cigar shaped to egg shaped. Formation changed while the witness watched.

August 23, 1955: Arlington, Virginia. Witness watched a number of orange, flat, disc-shaped objects which were very high and in very rapid flight.

August 27, 1956: Juniata, Pennsylvania. A witness watched a single circular object with a plastic dome protruding from the top. The object climbed to about 20,000 feet by climbing vertically. It disappeared by fading from sight.

Sept. 4, 1956: Dallas, Texas. Military and civilian witnesses watched a single object that was "star" shaped but the size of a dime held at arm's length. The object flashed from white to red and disappeared traveling to the west.

Sept. 14, 1956: Highland, North Carolina. Witness saw fourteen objects, about the size of a grapefruit, colored yellow to a deep red, flying in a formation. The objects flew from southwest to east and then to the northeast and the returned.

Nov. 1, 1956: North of St. Louis, Missouri. Military observer watched a single object that was described as a round light that was a very light yellow. The witness believed the object moved at more than twelve hundred miles an hour.

Nov. 30, 1956: Charleston AFB, South Carolina. Air Force Major D. D. Grimes and an Air Force pilot saw one object as it appeared to be about a hundred feet above the water. They believed that the object, which they could give no shape, color, or size for, was about ten miles from them.

Dec. 31, 1956: Guam. An Air Force interceptor pilot 1st Lt. Ted Brunson saw a single, round, white object as it passed under his aircraft. Pilot attempted to intercept but was unable to gain on it. Finally broke off because of low fuel. The UFO was white, round, and had blinking white lights.

April 25, 1957: Ringgold, Louisiana. 2:30 a.m. Witness saw a single object that was crescent shaped and colored a bright red.

June 12, 1957: Milan, Italy. 7:30 p.m. G. U. Donadio watched a single, bright green-yellow object as it zigzagged from the east at high speed, and descended over the city. It seemed to rotate on its axis. The object was in sight for seventeen minutes.

July 27, 1957: Longmont, Colorado. J. L. Siverly saw one thick, ice blue disk with a honeycomb top, as it maneuvered for ten minutes. Case was submitted eight years later by Hynek in 1965.

July 29, 1957: Cleveland, Ohio. Civilian airline pilot, Capt. R. L. Stimley and First Officer F. J. Downing reported a round, object that was a brilliant yellow, dimmed and returned to its brilliance. It crossed in front of the airliner.

July 29, 1957: Oldsmar, Florida. 11:45 a.m. Civilian, E. E. Henkins saw a single object that was a pale yellow ball of fire the size of a basketball. The object exploded into multicolored lights upon hitting the water.

Sept. 20, 1957: Kadena Air Force Base, Okinana. 8:00 p.m. Military witness SSGT H., T. O'Connor and SSGT H. D. Bridgeman saw a single object that was shaped like a Coke bottle without the neck and glowed like a fluorescent light. It made no sound. It made four passes lasting five to ten seconds with four of five minutes between passes.

Oct. 8, 1957: Seattle, Washington. Military witnesses, SFC Merrel E. Lee and MSG Walter W. Housely, watched two, round, white objects maneuvering in the sky. They were in sight for about 25 to 30 seconds.

Nov. 2, 1957: Levelland, Texas. A series of sightings that included the sheriff, Weir Clem, other police officers, and several unrelated witnesses began when Pedro Saucido saw a bright red, egg-shaped object on the ground. Throughout the next several hours, others reported the object which stalled their cars and affected the electrical system. Air Force conclusion: Ball lightning.

Nov. 6, 1957: Boerne, Texas. A civilian said to have seen an oval-shaped object, brilliant orange in color with no tail or exhaust. The object was seen hovering about twelve feet above the ground.

Nov. 6, 1957: Radium Springs, New Mexico. Witnesses were numerous law enforcement officers including Officer Barela of the city police and Officer Archuleta as well as two others. It was reported that the officers were in separate cars in separate parts of the city. The object was round, changing from red to green to blue to white. It rose vertically from the Organ Mountains. There are two separate report files but it seems to be the same case. One is marked unidentified and the second as astronomical, meaning it was a bright star.

Nov. 8, 1957: Merrick, Long Island, New York. l0:10 a.m. Mrs. L. Dinner saw a bar-shaped object, 3.5' long, giving off blue flashes, making a swishing sound. No further data.

Nov. 26, 1957: Robins AFB, Georgia. 10:07 a.m. Three control tower operators, one weather observer and four others watched a single silver,

cigar-shaped object suddenly vanished after minutes.

Nov. 30, 1957: New Orleans, Louisiana. 2:11 p.m. Witnesses: three U.S. Coast Guardsmen. One round object turned white, then gold, then separated into three parts and turned red. Sighting lasted 20 minutes.

Dec. 13, 1957: Col Anahuac, Mexico. 9:35 a.m. R.C. Cano. Fourteen-fifteen circular, tapered discs, very bright, flew in a formation like a stack of coins, then changed to an inverted-V formation. Sighting lasted 20 minutes.

Dec. 17, 1957: near Grand Junction, Colorado. 7:20 p.m. F.G. Hickman, 17. One round object changed from yellow to white to green to red; red tail was twice as long as the body.

March 14, 1958: Healdsburg, California. 8:45 a.m. Mr. and Mrs. W. F. Cummings and one other saw a 3' round; black object touched the ground and then took off. Watched for 2 minutes.

April 14, 1958: Lynchburg, Virginia. 1 p.m. USAF Major D.G. Tilley, flying C-47 transport watched one grey-black rectangular object rotated very slowly on its horizontal axis for 4 seconds.

May 9, 1958: Bohol Island, Philippine Islands. 11:05 a.m. Philippine Airlines pilot saw an object with a shiny, metallic surface was falling and spinning for 1.5 minutes.

June 14, 1958: Pueblo, Colorado. 10:46 a.m. Airport weather observer O.R. Foster, using a theodolite watched a single object shaped like Saturn, less the bottom part; silver with no metallic luster, flew overhead for 5 minutes.

June 20, 1958: Ft. Bragg, North Carolina. 11:05 p.m. Battalion Communication Chief SFC A. Parsley saw one silver, circular object, its lower portion seen through a green haze, hovered, then oscillated slightly, then moved at great speed. Watched for 10 minutes.

Aug. 17, 1958: Warren, Michigan. 7:05 p.m. A.D. Chisholm. One extremely bright object shaped first like a bell, then like a saucer, hovered for 5 minutes, flipped over and sped away to the west-south-west. Sighting lasted 6-10 minutes.

Sept. 1, 1958: Wheelus AFB, Libya. 12:15 a.m. Philco technical representative A.M. Slaton. One round, blue-white object flew at varying speeds. First sighting lasted 2 minutes, second lasted 1.5 minutes.

Oct. 2, 1958: Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania. 2:30 p.m. Naturalist Ivan Sanderson. One dull-grey object, shaped like a pickle with a flat bottom, flew erratically and made loops for 15 seconds.

Oct. 27, 1958: Lock Raven Dam, Maryland. 10:30 p.m. Phillip Small, Alvin Cohen. One large, flat egg-shaped object affected a car's electrical system and caused a burning sensation on one of its occupants.

Nov. 3, 1958: Minot, North Dakota. 2:01 p.m. MSGT William R. Butler, medic. One bright green object, shaped like a10 cent piece, and one smaller, silver round object. First object exploded, then second object moved toward the location of the first at high speed.

March 26 or 27, 1959: Corsica, Pennsylvania. 12:45 p.m. T.E. Clark. One dark red, barrel-shaped object, 20 feet long, 6-7 feet high, descended below some trees during the 3-minute sighting.

June 18, 1959: Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. 9:30 p.m. A. Cavelli and R. Blessin, using 7x binoculars. One brown, cigar-shaped object came from below the horizon ascending to 40-50^ above the horizon in 4 minutes.

June 30, 1959: Patuxent River NAS, Maryland. 8:23 p.m. USN Cdr. D. Connolly. One gold, oblate-shaped object, nine times as wide as it was thick, metallic and with sharp edges, flew straight and level for 20-30 seconds.

July 25, 1959: Irondequoit, New York. 1 p.m. Technical illustrator W.D. Neva. One thin, crescent moon-shaped object with a small white dome in the center, flew at tremendous speed for 5-10 seconds.

Aug. 10, 1959: Goose AFB, Labrador, Canada. 1:28 a.m. Royal Canadian Air Force pilot Flt. Lt. M.S. Mowat, on ground. One large star-like light crossed 53 degrees of sky in 25 minutes.

Sept. 13, 1959: Gills Rock, Wisconsin. 1:05 a.m. R.H. Daubner. One round yellow light, with eight blue lights within it, and then five larger red lights, flew very fast vertically while making a pulsating jet noise. Sighting lasted 10 minutes.

Sept. 13, 1959: Bunker Hill AFB, Indiana. 4 p.m. At least two control tower operators and the pilot of a Mooney private airplane. One pear-shaped object, colored white, cream, and metallic, with a trail under it. Object showed little movement during 3 hours. Attempted intercept by USAF T-33 jet trainer failed.

Oct. (3rd or 4th week), 1959: Telephone Ridge, Oregon. 9:15 p.m. Department store manager C.A. Cissman. One bright light approached, hovered about 30 minutes, and then was up and gone in 2 seconds.

Oct. 4, 1959: Quezon, Philippine Islands. 9:25 p.m. USN Lt. C.H. Pogson, CPO K.J. Moore. One large round or oval object, changing from

red to red-orange, flew straight and level for 15 minutes.

Oct. 6, 1959: Lincoln, Nebraska. 8:15 p.m. LTC L. Liggett (Selective Service) and his wife. One round, white-yellow light made several abrupt turns and flew very fast for 2 minutes.

Oct. 19. 1959: Kansas. 9:25 p.m. Captain F.A. Henney, engineering instructor at USAF Academy, flying a T-33 jet trainer. One bright yellowish light came head-on at the T-33, the pilot avoided it and the light dimmed. Sighting lasted 30 seconds.

Nov. 18, 1959: Crystal Springs, Mississippi. 6:25 p.m. J.M. Porter. A row of red lights flew slow, then speeded up immensely. Sighting lasted 5-6 minutes.

Feb. 27, 1960: Rome AFB, New York. 6:27 p.m. Control tower officer Capt. J. Huey and four other tower operators. One light trailing a white fan shape, made a mild descent for 3-4 minutes.

March 4, 1960: Dubuque, Iowa. 5:55 p.m. Charles Morris, an airplane instructor. Three elliptical-shaped objects made a slight climb for 4 minutes and then just disappeared. Film exposed during sighting showed no images of the objects. Analysis suggested a possible mirage, but that would have left an image on the film. Air Force conclusion was “Unidentified.”

March 23, 1960: Indianapolis, Indiana. 3:35 a.m. Mr. and Mrs. E.I. Larsen. A series of balls, arranged like an "X" with one diagonal line, seen for 3/4 of a minute.

April 12, 1960: LaCamp, Louisiana. 9 p.m. Monroe Arnold. One fiery-red disc exploded four or five times. Analysis of paint samples from explosion proved inconclusive. Sighting lasted 2-3 seconds.

April 17, 1960: Richards-Gebauer AFB, Missouri. 8:29 p.m. USAF Major J.G. Ford and Link representative A. Chapdelaine, using a 48x telescope. One reddish glow made an odd orbit for 2.5 minutes.

April 25, 1960: Shelby, Montana. 7-10 p.m. Mrs. M. Clark. Five circular objects flew in trail formation, hovered and accelerated and made sharp turns. Case file includes other reports from Mrs. Clark for previous 3 years.

July 19, 1960: St. Louis, Missouri. 8:30 p.m. T.L. Ochs. One round, bright red light flew overhead, stopped and hovered, and then backed up. Sighting lasted 20 minutes.

Aug. 23, 1960: Wichita, Kansas. 3:24 a.m. Boeing aeronautical engineer C.A. Komiske. One round object with yellow lights coming from

what looked like three triangular windows at bottom. Object was dull orange. Flew in an arc for 2 minutes.

Aug. 29, 1960: Crete, Illinois. 4:05 p.m. Farmer Ed Schneeweis. One shiny, round, silver object flew straight up very fast for 18 seconds.

Sept. 10, 1960: Ridgecrest, California. 9:50 p.m. Mr. and Mrs. M.G. Evans. Two light gray glowing objects, saucer or boomerang-shaped, which swished when accelerating.

Oct. 5, 1960: Mt. Kisko, New York. 7:37 p.m. E.G. Crossland. One bright, star-like light moved across 120 degrees of sky in 20 seconds.

Nov. 27, 1960: Chula Vista, California. 7:30 p.m. Mr. and Mrs. L.M. Hart. One orange-red point of light made huge circles and stopped during the 20-30 minute sighting.

Nov. 29, 1960: south of Kyushu, Japan. 6:38 p.m. USAF LTC R.L. Blwlin (sp?) and Major F.B. Brown, flying a T-33 jet trainer. One white light 8lowed and paralleled the course of the T-33 for 10 minutes.

Feb, 27, 1961: Bark River, Michigan. 10:15 p.m. Mrs. LaPalm. One fiery-red, round object, preceded by light rays, slowed and descended, while her dog howled.

Spring, 1961: Kemah, Texas. Case missing from official files.

April 24, 1961: 200 miles SW of San Francisco, California. 3:34 a.m. Aircraft commander Capt. H.J. Savoy and navigator lst Lt. M.W. Rand, on USAF RC-l2lD patrol plane. One reddish-white, round object or light, similar to satellite. Observed for 8 minutes.

May 22, 1961: Tyndall AFB, Florida. 4:30 p.m. Mrs. A.J. Jones and Mrs. R.F. Davis. One big silver dollar disc hovered and revolved, then suddenly disappeared after 15 minutes.

June 2, 1961: Miyako Jima, Japan. 10:17 p.m. lLT R.N. Monahan and Hazeltine Electric Co. technical representative D.W. Mattison. One blue-white light flew erratic course at varying speed, in an arc-like path for 5 minutes.

July 7, 1961: Copemish, Michigan. 11 p.m. Nannette Hilley saw one large ball flew slow, split into four after 45 minutes. Four flew close formation, descended and flew away to the west. Total sighting lasted 1 hour.

July 11, 1961: Springfield, Ohio. 7:45 p.m. Ex-air navigator G. Scott, Mrs. Scott, and neighbors. One round, bright light like shiny aluminum, passed overhead in 20 minutes.

July 20, 1961: Houston, Texas. 8 a.m. Trans-Texas Airlines Capt. A.V. Beather, flying DC-3, plus vague report from ground radar. Two very bright white light or objects flew in trail formation for 30 minutes.

Aug. 12, 1961: Kansas City, Kansas. 9 p.m. College seniors J.B. Furkenhoff and Tom Phipps. One very large oval object with a fin extending from one edge to the center; like a sled with lighted car running boards. Hovered at 50' altitude for 3-5 minutes, then flew straight up and east.

Nov. 21, 1961: Oldtown, Florida. 7:30 p.m. C. Locklear and Helen Hatch. One round, red-orange object flew straight up and faded after 3-4 minutes.

Nov. 23, 1961: Sioux City, Iowa. 9:30 p.m. F. Braunger. One bright red star flew straight and level for 15 minutes.

Dec. 13, 1961: Washington, D.C. 5:05 p.m. C.F. Muncy, ex-U.S. Navy pilot W.J. Myers, and G. Weber. One dark diamond-shaped object with a bright tip flew straight and level for 1-3 minutes.

Feb. 25, 1962: Kotzbue, Alaska. 7:20 p.m. One U.S. Army private, six anonymous civilians. One red light, trailed 30 seconds later by a blue light. Sighting lasted 5 minutes.

March l, 1962: Salem, New York. 10:35 p.m. Mrs. L. Doxsey, 66. One gold-colored box flew straight and level across the horizon for 3-4 minutes.

March 26, 1962: Ramstein Air Base, West Germany. 1:35 p.m. USAF Captain J.M. Lowery, from an unspecified aircraft. One thin, cylindrical object--l/3 snout, 2/3 tail fins--flew at an estimated Mach 2.7 for 5-8 seconds.

March 26, 1962: Naperville, Illinois. 11:40 p.m. Mrs. D. Wheeler, Claudine Milligan. Six or eight red balls, arranged in a rectangular formation, became two objects with lights by the end of the 15 minute sighting.

March 26, 1962: Westfield, Massachusetts. 10:45 p.m. Many unidentified young people. One large red ball flew or fell down, then went back up during 3-10 minute sighting. Note: May 26?

April 4, 1962: Wurtland, Kentucky. 0150Z. G.R. Wells and J. Lewis, using 117x telescope. One small object changing brightness, gave off smoke but remained stationary like a comet for 6 minutes. Case missing from official files.

June 21, 1962: Indianapolis, Indiana. 4 a.m. LTC H. King and tail gunner M/Sgt. Roberts, aboard a B-52 heavy jet bomber. Three bright, star-like lights: one seen; 10 seconds later, two more were seen. Total sighting took 3 minutes.

June 30, 1962: Richmond, Virginia. 9 a.m. 13 year old Meadors. One red, star-like light seen for an unspecified length of time. No further details in files.

July 19, 1962: Bayhead, New Jersey. 9:30 p.m. C.T. Loftus, H. Wilbert. Four or five lights darted about the sky for 7-10 minutes.

July 29, 1962: Ocean Springs, Mississippi. 11:20 p.m. Mr. and Mrs. M.O. Barton. One bright cherry-red, diamond-shaped object flew slow, hovered, made fast 1/2 loops for l0 minutes.

Aug. 18, 1962: Bermuda. 5 p.m. Owner M. Sheppard and chief announcer A. Seymour of radio station. Three dull-white, egg-shaped objects wavered as they moved for 20 minutes.

Sept. 21, 1962: WSW of Biloxi, Mississippi, in the Gulf of Mexico. 7:37 p.m. Fishing boat captain S.A. Guthrie. Two objects, red and black with orange streaks, one as big as the Moon, and the other smaller. Arced across the sky for 13 minutes.

Oct. 23, 1962: Farmington, Utah. 3 p.m. R.O. Christensen. One grey and silver ball, trailing what looked like twine with two knots in it, swerved, and climbed away at a 45' angle, making a sound like a flock of ducks (rushing air).

Nov. 17, 1962: Tampa, Florida. 9 p.m. F.L. Swindale, college graduate and ex-USMC Captain Three bright star-like lights approached, hovered and bounced, then faded after 11-15 minutes.

May 18, 1953: New Plymouth, New Zealand. 10:30 p.m. C.S. Chapman, 15. One white, fuzzy, flashing light hovered and darted around for 4 minutes.

May 22, 1963: Pequannock, New Jersey. 10:45 p.m. Myra Jackson. Four pink wheels spun or rolled very fast from east to west in succession, each taking about 1 second.

June 15, 1963: 200 miles north of Venezuela. 10:39 a.m. 3rd Mate R.C. Chamberlin, of S/ Thetis. One luminous disc travelled at 1.5 times the speed of satellite for 3-4 minutes.

Summer, 1963: Middletown, New York. 9:30 or 10 p.m. Grace Dutcher. Eight-ten lights moved at random, then in an oval formation,

then singly, during the 1 minute sighting.

July 1, 1963: Glen Ellyn, Illinois. 8 p.m. R.B. Stiles, ll, using a theodolite. One light, the size of a match head at arm's length, flashed and moved around the sky for 1.5 hours.

Aug. 11, 1963: Warrenville, Illinois. 10 p.m. R.M. Boersma. One light moved around the sky for 20 seconds.

Aug. 13, 1963: St. Gallen, Switzerland. 8:04 p.m. A.F. Schelling. One fireball became a dark object after 4 minutes, and then a bigger glow, a minute later, and finally exploded.

Sept. 14, 1963: Susanville, California. 3:15 p.m. E.A. Grant, veteran of 37 years training forest fire lookouts for the U.S. Forest Service. One round object intercepted a long object and either attached itself to the latter or disappeared. Sighting lasted l0 minutes.

Sept. 15, 1963: Vandalia, Ohio. 6 p.m. Mrs. F.E. Roush. Two very bright gold objects--one shaped like a banana and the other like an ear of corn - one remained stationary, the other moved from west to north during 10 minutes,

Oct. 4, 1963: Bedford, Ohio. 3:32 p.m. R.E. Carpenter, 15. One intense oblong light with tapered ends and surrounded by an aqua haze, flashed and flickered while stationary for 15 seconds.

Oct. 23, 1963: Meridian, Idaho. 8:35 p.m. Several unnamed students, including Gordon. One object shaped like a circle from below and like a football from the side, hovered low over the observers, making a deep, pulsating, loud, extremely irritating sound, for 6 minutes.

Oct. 24, 1963: Cupar Fife, Scotland. A. McLean (12) and G. McLean (8). One light moved for an unspecified length of time. No further details in files. Note: Project Blue Book chief Maj. H. Quintanilla told the youngsters, in a letter, that this was "one of the most complete" of the unexplained cases for the year.

Dec. 11, 1963: McMinnville, Oregon. 7 a.m. W.W. Dolan, professor of mathematics and astronomy, and dean of the faculty of Linfield College. One bright, star-like light hovered, slowed, dimmed and flashed in 1 minute.

Dec. 16, 1963: 800 miles north of Midway Island. 5:05 p.m. Unspecified persons aboard a military aircraft. One white light blinked 2-3 times per second as it moved very fast across the sky for 15 seconds.

April 3, 1964: Monticello, Wisconsin. 9 p.m. Mr. and Mrs. R. Wold watched four huge red lights in a rectangular formation, with a white light

above, were near the ground, tilted and flew away after 3-4 minutes.

April 11, 1964: Homer, New York. 6:30 p.m. Physiotherapist W.B. Ochsner and wife. Two cloud-like objects darkened; one shot away and returned during the 30-45 minute sighting.

April 24, 1964: Socorro, New Mexico. 5:45 p.m. Socorro policeman Lonnie Zamora watched object with flame underneath descend toward the desert. Two small humanoids observed near vertical oval on ground. Later watched object take off with a roar, go silent and fly away. Burning and charred brush found at landing sight.

May 9, 1964: Chicago, Illinois. 10:20 p.m. J.R. Betz, U.S. District Court reporter. Three light green crescent-shaped objects, about half the apparent size of the Moon, flew very fast in tight formation from east to west, oscillating in size and color for 3 seconds.

May 18, 1964: Mt. Vernon, Virginia. 5:15 p.m. Civil engineer F. Meyers. One small, glowing white oval split twice after moving from the right of the Moon around to the left. Sighting lasted 17 minutes.

May 26, 1964: Cambridge, Massachusetts. 7:43 p.m. P. Wankowicz, RAF pilot and ex-Smithsonian satellite tracker. One thin, white ellipsoid (3.5 times as long as wide) flew straight and level for 3-4 seconds.

May 26, 1964: Pleasantview, Pennsylvania. 11 p.m. Rev. H.C. Shaw. One yellow-orange light, shaped like the bottom of a ball, was spotted in a field and chased down the road for 2 miles.

June 13, 1964: Toledo, Ohio. 9:15 p.m. B.L. English, announcer for radio station WTOD. Three glowing white spheres, glowing red on their sides, moved slow, hovered and then moved in circles very fast, all the while making a low, rumbling sound.

June 29, 1964: Lavonia, Georgia. B.E. Parham noticed a brillian light in the sky, moving toward him at a 45 degree angle. He felt a burning sensation on his arms. Air Force conclusion: The phenomena was determined to be St. Elmo's Fire. The report was not forwarded to the investigating office at Wright Patterson since it was evaluated on the spot.

July 16, 1964: 15 miles south of Houghton Lake, Michigan. 11:15 p.m. Northern Air Service pilot K. Jannereth. Four white lights in a stepped-up echelon formation, were joined by two more. They closed in on the airplane, then rapidly slowed and flew along with it for a total of 5 minutes.

July 20, 1964: Littleton, Illinois. 4:45 a.m. J.J. Winkle. One 60' diameter round-topped, flat-bottomed object with a long acetylene-colored flame shooting downward, flew straight and level, made a half loop, then rose up. Sighting lasted l minute.

July 27, 1964: Norwich, New York. 7:30 p.m. Duabert, engineering supervisor. One aluminum sphere with a luminous ring, remained stationary for 4-5 minutes.

July 27, 1964: Denver, Colorado. 8:20 p.m. A. Borsa. One white ball of fire, the size of a car, climbed slowly, then speeded up. Sighting lasted 2-3 minutes.

Aug. 10, 1964: Wake Island. 5:16 a.m. Aircraft commander Capt. B.C. Jones and navigator 1LT H.J. Cavender, in parked USAF C-124 transport plane. One reddish, blinking light approached the runway, stopped and made several reverses during 2 minutes.

Aug. 15, 1964: New York, New York. 1:20 a.m. S.F.D. Alessandro. One 10'x5' bullet-shaped object with wavy lines on the rounded front part and six pipes along the straight rear portion, made a "whishhh" sound.

Aug. 15, 1964: Yosemite National Park, California. 8:15 a.m. E.J. Haug, of the San Francisco Orchestra and the San Francisco Conservatory of Music; and C.R. Bubb, a high school mathematics teacher. Three bright silver, round objects, in a stack formation, flew very fast, changing positions within the formation. The sound of rushing air was heard during the 3-4 second sighting.

Aug. 18, 1964: Atlantic Ocean, 200 miles east of Dover, Delaware. 12:35 a.m. Major D.W. Thompson and First Pilot 1LT J.F. Jonke, on a USAF C-124 transport plane saw one round, blurred, reddish-white object on a collision course with the C-124 from ahead and below. The airplane evaded the object. Sighting las ted 2 minutes.

Sept. 4, 1964: Cisco Grove, California. The witness claimed to have seen an object come toward him. He saw two humanoid beings and two creatures he described as robots. Air Force conclusion: Psychological.

Sept. 10, 1964: Cedar Grove, New Jersey. 7:09 p.m. P.H. DePaolo saw four white lights, 3-4 apart, were seen to the north, going west for 45 seconds.

Nov. 14, 1964: Menominee Falls, Wisconsin. 9:40 p.m. Dr. G.R. Wagner, MD and two girls watched three dim, reddish lights flew through a 160 degrees arc in 5 to 6 seconds.

Nov. 19, 1964: 1,400 miles east of Tokyo, Japan. One bright white flashing light was travelling from horizon to horizon in 20 seconds.

Jan 23, 1965: Williamsburg, Virginia. 8:40 a.m. Mr. T.F. Mains saw one mushroom or lightbulb-shaped object, 75-80' high, 25' diameter on top and l0' bottom diameter; metallic grey with a red-orange glow on the near side and a blue glow on the far side. The object made a sound like a vacuum cleaner. The witness' car electrical system was affected as the object moved away at an altitude of 4 feet.

March 4, 1965: Corvallis, Oregon. 9:23 p.m. W.V. Harrison. Three lights rose from the ground, several seconds apart. The next day, an oily spot was found at the site.

March 8, 1965: Mt. Airy, Maryland. 7:40 p.m. J.H. Martin, instrument maker for U.S. Bureau of Standards watched six lights fly overhead slowly for 3 minutes.

April 4, 1965: Keesler AFB, Mississippi. 4:05 a.m. USAF A2C Corum, a weather observer; confirmation by college student R. Pittman not clear from available data. One 40' black, oval object with four lights along the bottom, flew in and out of the clouds for 15 seconds.

May 7, 1965: Oxford, Michigan. 7:30 p.m. M.E. Marshall. One light, like a satellite, split into two parts, one of which was copperish color, then two more joined up. One object may have been tumbling. Sighting lasted 1 minute.

July 6, 1965: Kiel, Wisconsin. 9:30 p.m. Mrs. E.R. Hayner. One flashing light, like a satellite, was seen for less than 1 minute. No further data was in the files.

July 25, 1965: Castalia, Ohio. 9:15 p.m. Amateur astronomer M.D. Harris, 16. One bright blue star crossed 90 of sky in 10-15 seconds.

Aug. 4, 1965: Dallas, Texas. 9:30 p.m. J.A. Carter, 19. One light flew fast, straight and level for 12 seconds. No further data in files.

Aug. 4, 1965: Tinley Park, Illinois. 11:35 p.m. Two unnamed 14-year-old boys. One light moved around the sky for 16-17 seconds.

Aug. 19, 1965: Cherry Creek New York. 8:20 p.m. Mrs. William Butcher, son Harold, 17, and children saw a large elliptical object, with a reddish vapor underneath, came close to the ground, then shot straight up into the clouds a few seconds later. Radio drowned out by static; a tractor engine stopped. When the object was on the ground, a steady beeping sound could be heard. Afterwards, a strange odor was noticed, and the next day, a purplish liquid, 2"x2" marks and patches of singed

grass were found at the site. A bull bellowed and tried to break its bonds. Aug. 30, 1965: Urbana, Ohio. 10:30 p.m. M.A. Lilly, N. Smith, T. Nastoff. One white ball, 5-8' in diameter and trailed by a 2-3' light, hit the road 100' in front of the witness' car, bounced and flew away. Sighting lasted 3-4 seconds.

Sept. 3, 1965: Exeter, New Hampshire. 2 a.m. Patrolmen Eugene Bertrand, Jr. and David Hunt, and Norman Muscarello. One large, dark, elliptical object with a row of red lights around it, moved slowly and erratically around houses and trees, while lights blinked in sequence. Farm animals were very noisy. Sighting lasted about 1 hour.

Sept. 3, 1965: Damon, Texas. 11 p.m. Brazoria County Chief Sheriff's Deputy Billy McCoy and Deputy Robert Goode. One triangular object, 150-200' long, 40-50' thick at middle and dark grey, with a long, bright, pulsing, purple light on the right side and a long blue light on the left side. Came from distance to 150' off highway and 100' in the air. Purple light illuminated ground beneath object and interior of police car. Driver felt heat on his left arm. Initial sighting lasted 5-10 minutes. Second sighting occurred later that night.

Sept. 25, 1965: Chisholm, Minnesota. 9:55 a.m. Bett Diamon. Five orange lights in a row flew fast and made an abrupt turn during the 1 minute sighting.

Sept. 25, 1965: Rodeo, New Mexico. 10 p.m. Dr. George Walton, physical chemist, and wife. Two round white objects flew side-by-side, at 30-50' altitude, pacing the witnesses' car for 6 minutes.

Oct. 4, 1965: Middletown, Ohio. Tucker. Case missing from official files.

Feb. 2, 1966: Salisbury, North Carolina. 11:15 p.m. Mr. and Mrs. L.J. Wise. One silver, diamond-shaped object with several balls constantly in very fast motion around it, and much light. Object hovered over the trees for 3-4 minutes, while a dog barked, and then zipped out of sight. Sighting lasted 1 hour.

Feb. 6, 1966: Nederland, Texas. 5:45 a.m. Mr. and Mrs. K.R. Gulley. One yellow, lighted object at 500; altitude and a pulsating red glow on the lawn. The house lights went out, and high frequency bothered the witnesses' ears. Sighting lasted 5-10 minutes.

March 20, 1966: Miami, Florida. 12:15 a.m. USAF Reserve Major K.C. Smith, employee of NASA at Cape Kennedy. One pulsating light which varied from white to intense blue made a jerky ascent and then

rapidly accelerated away to the north after 5 minutes. March 22, 1966: Houston, Texas. 1:30 a.m. S.J. Musachia. White flashing lights, and the air full of smoke. Lit up witness' apartment. Sound of "yen " heard up close during 4-minute sighting.

March 23, 1966: Temple, Oklahoma. 5:05 a.m. W.E. Laxson. One large object, like a wingless C-124 transport plane; 75' long, 8' high and 12' wide; with a bubble canopy on top. Sat on highway, a man dressed in military work clothes entered, and it rose after about 40 seconds.

March 26, 1966: Texhoma, Oklahoma. Midnight. Mrs. P.N. Beer and Mrs. E. Smith. One flashing light buzzed their car from the front then hovered. Sighting lasted l0 minutes.

April 5, 1966: Alto, Tennessee. 11:55 p.m. W. Smith watched one oval object with a dark top that appeared cone-shaped when moving. It made a high- frequency noise during the 2.5 hour sighting.

April 5, 1966: Lycoming, New York. 3 a.m. Lillian Louis witnessed one vapor-like sphere hovered and spun at low altitude, shooting its exhaust onto the ground below. Sighting of 1 minute.

April 16, 1966: Portage County, Ohio 5:30 a.m. Dale Spaur and Wilbur Neff, among others, sighted a low flying UFO that was bright enough to light the road under. They chased it for about thirty minutes, until it disappeared by climbing in the brightening sky. Air Force conclusion: Satellite and Venus.

April 30, 1966: Sacramento, California. 3:15 a.m. Anita Miller watched as one light moved around the sky for 2 1/2 hours.

May 7, 1966: Goodfellow AFB, Texas. 9:55 p.m. A3C W.L. Whitehead watched one short, cylindrical object with pointed ends and a yellow light at one end and blue light at the other, flew straight and level for 35 seconds.

June 6, 1966: Spooner, Wisconsin. 9:30 p.m. Dorothy Gray saw two domed discs with sparkling upper surfaces and square windows in their tops, revolved above a lake, apparently causing strange behavior of the lake water during the 25 second sighting.

July 10, 1967: Meridian, Mississippi. The witness said that the car coasted to a stop and the radio faded out. He saw an object of excessive size pass about three hundred feet over his car. It disappeared by accelerating at an angle disappearing into the low clouds.

Aug 21, 1968: Ottsville, Pennsylvania. Photographs of an object were taken as it flew in an irregular and jerky path. Air Force conclusion: Insufficient data for evaluation because the proper Air Force forms had not been filed.

Sept 15, 1968: Ocala, Florida 9:30 p.m. A light was observed doing aerobatics for 15 minutes. Light rose quickly and disappeared among the stars. Almost immediately a second, white light was seen under the haze above Ocala. The pilots of a light plane reported that the light came at them rapidly on a collision course and pilots thought it was a sidewinder missile fired at them.

Oct 24, 1968: Minot Air Force Base, North Dakota Thirty minutes after midnight - 4:30 a.m. A number of Air Force personnel including the crew of a B-52 saw a light that was tracked by both ground based radar and the B-52's on-board radars. Air Force conclusion: Ground visual sighting was probably an aircraft (the B-52) and probably a star, the radar sighting was possibly a plasma, and the air-visual sighting was possibly a plasma.

Nov 23, 1968: Newton, Georgia. Witness encountered brilliant light directly above road as he rounded a bend in road in sparsely settled territory. About 200 feet ahead of him and 50 to 75 feet off the ground. The radio faded to static. The engine died. The light disappeared in a few seconds going straight up and the engine started by itself.

Jan 17, 1969: Crittenden, Virginia. 3:24 a.m. Roman K. Lupton was awakened by a sound similar to the hum of an electric motor that was in the process of going bad. Upon looking out the bedroom window, Lupton sighted several amber lights that were arranged in an elliptical fashion. It appeared to have a slow forward up and down motion except when it made a left banking turn. Several of the neighbors heard the sound but no one else saw the object.

Jan 17, 1969 Bradenton, Florida 11:30 p.m. A fifteen-year-old boy watched several disc-shaped objects in the night sky. Air Force conclusion: Unreliable report.

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